

Personal Experiences of a Capsule Wardrobe

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Almighty God, my creator, my father, my strength, my help, my wisdom, my inspiration, my friend, my comforter, my shelter, and my everything.

Abstract

People dress themselves every day. Dressing is considered as one of the simple daily routines people do, but it demands some rather complicated brain activities. There are a number of theories that have been suggested by previous researchers who claim that there is a close relationship between dressing and one's creativity. In this aspect, how to dress oneself can be an important measure of one's creativity. Also, a person's wardrobe can be the basis for this creativity.

In recent years, various capsule wardrobe projects have been emerging in the U.S since the great interest in sustainability has increased with the growth of fast fashion. The ultimate goal of a capsule wardrobe is to urge people to purchase fewer apparel products of higher quality so that they will not discard them so frequently and easily. The capsule wardrobe promotes sustainable practices, reduces over consumption, and suggests feasible ways of having an impact on the environment, culture and society at the individual level. Moreover, creating different daily outfits through playing around with limited items of the capsule wardrobe provides people with an opportunity to enhance their creativity.

The purpose of this study is to examine personal experiences of a capsule wardrobe and how this daily practice of creating and dressing with limited clothing items can have an impact on creativity and sustainability. This study seeks to explore the motivations, benefits, and limitations of engaging in a capsule wardrobe project as perceived by a sample of volunteer participants.

This study borrowed the basic framework from Project 333 which is a minimalist fashion challenge to live with 33—or fewer than 33—items of clothing kept in a wardrobe for three months—That is why it is called ‘Project 333’. The participation duration was reduced from three months to two months. The 33 items included clothing, shoes and bags—but does not include accessories and jewelry.

This study had seven female volunteer participants who were junior or senior students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota. All of them were living in Minnesota and had lived in the U.S. for at least 10 years. They had no previous experience of creating and managing their capsule wardrobes.

In this study, multiple data collection methods including online survey, creativity tests, daily journals and pre-and-post interviews were used to achieve methodological triangulation. Based on the online survey and daily journals, merged patterns for creating different ensembles with limited items were found. The data from creativity tests, daily journals and pre-interview were analyzed and interpreted to discover how the daily practice of dressing with a capsule wardrobe affect one’s creativity. Findings from pre and post interviews were used to examine the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe perceived by participants of this study.

This study suggests feasible and accessible solutions to waste, pollution and over consumption. Since there are few studies on how dressing strategies can influence one’s creativity and how the capsule wardrobe can empower individuals to reduce their impact on this planet, the researcher believed that this study would have significant meaning educationally, academically and socially.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Every morning, people stand in front of their wardrobes and ask themselves the same repeated question: “What am I going to wear today?” Although people learn from their parents how to ‘wear’ clothes when they are young, they start to create their own ‘rules’ of wearing and these rules become their individual ‘styles’. When dressing, people should consider a lot of different things such as T.P.O (Time, Place, Occasion), body size, skin and hair color, season, and trend. Dressing seems like a simple daily activity, but it demands some rather complicated brain activities. Also, it is based on cultural, social, historical and psychological motivation. In this aspect, how to dress oneself can be an important measure of one’s creativity and a person’s wardrobe can be the basis for this creativity.

Creativity has been a conversation topic in almost every field of study. In the aspect of apparel research, many researchers have studied creativity because it is deeply related to design and education. However, since creativity involves complicated mental or psychological concepts and human ability that is not tangible, it is a convoluted subject to define exactly and clearly. Wallace (1986) argued, “There is no universal agreement on what creativity actually is.” (Wallace, 1986, p. 68) Many scholars who are the experts in creativity have argued that creativity is inherent in the nature of ‘all’ people. However, there are two different theoretical concepts and perspectives of potential of one’s

creativity. Over the years, many scholars have argued the following questions: “Who can be considered as a ‘creative’ person?” and “Can an individual be trained to be creative or not?”

Wardrobe sustainability became a critical social issue after the emergence of fast fashion in apparel. Fast fashion shortened the fashion production and distribution cycle as well as the product lifecycle. When consumers purchase and discard their clothes thoughtlessly, they bring about various social, environmental and economic problems. As a reverberation of fast fashion, slow fashion, minimalism and voluntary simplicity which are known as anti-fashion movements began to appear. These anti-fast fashion movements encourage consumers to reduce excessive consumption, concern about the quality more than the quantity, and to be deeply aware of sustainable problems. Reducing consumption affects their wardrobes and what they have to work with in dressing on a daily basis.

Recently, various projects that are engaged with the concept of capsule wardrobe have been emerging in the U.S. The concept of capsule wardrobe has a thread of connection with these anti-fast fashion movements. The term ‘capsule wardrobe’ was first introduced by Susie Faux in 1980. In 1973, she founded Wardrobe, a unique boutique in the West End of London. The basic concept of capsule wardrobe defined by Faux is “by building a capsule wardrobe you will buy fewer clothes of a higher quality that you will wear more often” (Faux, 2009, July 15). Several capsule wardrobe projects including Project 333 not only let people contribute to sustainable practices, but also help them to develop a more individual style. Moreover, creating new outfits every day by

experimenting with a more limited wardrobe provides people with an opportunity to enhance their creativity and may even boost their confidence if they are successful.

Project 333 (<http://theproject333.com>) was started by Courtney Carver with the slogan of “be more with less” in 2010. It is a minimalist fashion challenge to live with 33—or fewer than 33—items of clothing kept in a wardrobe for three months. People all over the U.S. have participated in this project, and they like to share pictures of their outfits created with the limited number of items through their social media. Courtney has been emphasizing how creativity is an important source of creating a capsule wardrobe. She suggests “Play around and try new things, find style inspiration that you can use with your wardrobe, follow other capsule wardrobe dressers on social media, and most importantly, feel good in your clothes.” (“4 Ways to Get Creative with a Tiny Wardrobe”, 2015, December 8) Participants sometimes even mend or reform their items when they get bored with them. Because no one wears 33 items in the same way every day, participants can learn to enjoy mixing and matching their limited items to create creative and individual combinations of outfits.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine personal experiences of a capsule wardrobe and how they connect with sustainability and impact one’s creativity. This study seeks to explore the motivations, benefits, and limitations of creating and managing a capsule wardrobe for a sample of volunteer participants and how they are connected to sustainability and creativity.

To achieve the purpose, the following research questions are addressed:

- 1. What patterns, i.e., in the manipulation of garments and the visual result, emerge for creating different ensembles with limited items?*
- 2. How does the daily practice of dressing with a capsule wardrobe affect one's creativity?*
- 3. What do participants perceive are the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe, i.e. motivation for engaging in the activity, interest in sustainability?*

Rationale and Significance of Research

This study examines how a person's dressing habits and wardrobe strategy can influence creativity and how creating and managing a capsule wardrobe can contribute to sustainability. In this era of over production and over consumption, sustaining the planet will become increasingly important. To this end, consumers need to learn how to manage with fewer items in their wardrobes. Besides the overarching benefit of helping planet earth, the capsule wardrobe project may have other benefits, such as encouraging creativity in the user who participates in the project.

Scholars have sought to measure levels of creativity in various ways. They have tried to determine whether one can be trained to be creative and, if so, how. In previous studies, scholars and experts argue that clothing affects one's way of thinking and acting. There are several previous studies that have dealt with fashion and creativity; but most of them have examined an aspect of designing, not dressing. Fashion designers have been considered as creative people since they strive to create something new and innovative

that results in a trend that people follow. A successful fashion designer has established and developed a domain in the fashion world. Previous research has focused upon design thinking methodologies and design thinking processes for professional designers and students majoring in fashion design or retail merchandising. They often assume that creativity is something that cannot be taught but creative thinking can be taught (Lau, Ng, & Lee, 2009).

Although it is critical to study creativity at the level of the professional, it is also necessary to examine creativity at the level of everyday people who use products to create different combinations of outfits. Many fashion users are becoming proactive in developing creative ways of dressing because they want to play a role as a ‘creator’ and not just a passive consumer. For example, consumers have created various DIY (Do-It-Yourself) fashion. They either buy new clothing from stores or find old clothing in their wardrobes for redesigning and upcycling. These items turn out to be both expressive and unique. In this process of reforming, consumers are required to use their creativity.

Since the era of mass production began, which allowed the fashion industry to easily and quickly produce a myriad of garments that look the same, it has become hard to find one-of-a-kind clothing in the market. It led fashion users to be more creative in the way of dressing as a form of individual expression. DeLong (2005) argued, “People may buy a new product to identify with a particular group or to express their own personality.” The German philosopher and sociologist George Simmel (1904) defined these opposite but coexisting attributes of fashion as conformity and individuality. He explained that there is a dual tendency in individuals who find pleasure in dressing. People feel a sense

of stability and sense of belonging when their appearance looks similar to others within a group. At the same time, however, they seek to express themselves individually. This paradox of fashion involves a tension between conformity and individuality. It has motivated both designers and consumers to strive to express their identity through what they design and what they wear. However, consumers usually could find that the sameness found in the marketplace encourages their need for individuality in a variety of ways. For example, their daily outfits could become a result of their creativity using a wardrobe that provides inspiration. Thus, it is critical to know what exists in the closets of fashion consumers and how they manage and use their wardrobes to express their creativity.

A relocation company, Movinga, was interested in researching the discrepancy between owning and using products. In this study of 18,000 people in 20 countries, Movinga discovered that the majority of consumers are under a delusion about how much they own in their wardrobes and how much they actually wear. First, Movinga counted what was actually in the wardrobe of the participant and then recorded the daily use of those items. When they asked what percentage of their wardrobe had not been worn in the last 12 months, U.S. respondents ranked 16th with an average delusion of 39% for clothes that had not been worn in the last 12 months, but the researched value was 82% which was the second highest. It means that 82% of clothing items in people's wardrobes in the USA never were used ("WASTEFUL WORLD: How much of our belongings are we really using?", n.d.).

Then, why do many women think that they have nothing to wear in their closets?

According to ClosetMaid, the survey conducted by OnePoll with a sample of 1,000 US respondents in 2016 showed that the average American woman has 103 items of clothing in her closet. These women said that 21% of her closet is ‘unwearable’ and 12% of her clothes were never worn. 44% of the respondents answered that they cannot find an item in their closet at least once a month because one in four respondents said that they feel their wardrobes are unorganized. It motivates 61% of them to purchase new clothing item but the problem is one in seven have bought something they already had in their wardrobes simply because they could not find it. Respondents at 47% said that they struggle to create their outfits before heading out to work and one in nine women have been late to work because of time spent to find something to wear; 57% of the survey participants said having an organized closet would make finding what they want to wear easier and faster (“Survey: Women's Closets Are Full to the Brim”, n.d.).

These results show that a lot of items that people have in their wardrobes do not make getting dressed easier; it rather restricts them to find various options and gives them more stress. Moreover, disorganization and clutter of their wardrobes cause wasting time, money and resources since it connects to an endless glut of consumption. What could happen if people minimize and organize their wardrobes? Will this help them to more easily find and create outfits? Will this constraint help improve their creativity? Will this influence their buying habits?

A capsule wardrobe could answer these questions. It would be significant to see how a reduced number of items can affect one’s creative thinking process and change

consumption patterns. Also, to understand more fully, research should be conducted by collecting the data from the actual experiences of creating and managing the capsule wardrobe.

There is a lack of research on the experience of the user of the capsule wardrobe. Therefore, this study examined how to approach the project and record the experiences of those participating in a capsule wardrobe project. Moreover, there is a lack of research that deals with dressing strategy and wardrobe management with creativity development and sustainability, so the researcher believes that this study has significance educationally, academically and socially in the field of apparel studies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This is a study that explores personal experience of a capsule wardrobe and examines how this experience of creating and dressing limited clothing items can be connected to creativity and sustainability.

Therefore, major topics of this study are creativity, sustainability and a capsule wardrobe project. To carry out research on these issues, it is necessary to understand the concept of each topic clearly and thoroughly. This chapter provides the literature review on these topics based on previous research and multiple reference sources including books, journals, articles, and internet sources. Important terms are defined.

There are three main sections in this chapter: (1) A concept of Creativity; (2) A Concept of Sustainability in a Capsule Wardrobe Project; and (3) Perspectives and Assumptions Based on Theory of Change (TOC).

In the first section, two different theoretical concepts of creativity proposed by previous researchers are introduced and strengths and weaknesses of each concept are discussed. Then, the perspective of this study is described as well as how creativity can be connected to dressing habits based on previous research.

The second section talks about fast fashion, anti-fast fashion and sustainability. This connects to a concept of capsule wardrobe and its origin. How this project is being

addressed in the U.S. and examples of several capsule wardrobe projects are covered in this section.

The third section describes the concept of Theory of Change (TOC) and how this capsule wardrobe project can be applied to this framework.

A Concept of Creativity

Creativity has been one of the conversation topics in every field of study. In apparel research, many researchers have studied creativity because it is deeply related to design and education. However, since creativity involves complicated mental or psychological concepts and human ability that is not tangible, it is a convoluted subject to define exactly and clearly. Wallace (1986) argued, “There is no universal agreement on what creativity actually is.” (Wallace, 1986, p. 68) Many scholars who are the experts in creativity have argued that creativity is inherent in the nature of ‘all’ people. However, there are two different theoretical concepts and perspectives regarding the potential of one’s creativity. Over the years, many scholars have argued the following questions: “Who can be considered as a ‘creative’ person?” and “Can a person be trained to be creative?” In this section, two opposite viewpoints of creativity, their strengths and weaknesses, and creativity and dressing habits will be discussed.

Big-C: Creativity as a Genetic Factor

Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) defined two main different concepts of creativity as ‘Big-C’ and ‘little-c’ creativity. Big-C creativity is eminent creativity. Studying

creative geniuses who excel at high levels on creativity measures and their works are considered as the type of study and theory based on Big-C creativity. Many theories including Csikszentmihalyi's (1999) Systems Model of Creativity have focused on this Big-C concept. Csikszentmihalyi (1999) argued that creativity is presented as an interaction between the domain, the field, and the person. A domain is a broad field like music, art, or science. The field is defined as the "gatekeepers," such as teachers, editors, and critics. The third component is the person—the one who creates an idea or theory or piece of art that the field accepts and the domain incorporates. Csikszentmihalyi (2013) called the individual who exercises his or her influence on a field or domain or establishes a new domain as a 'creative person'—i.e. Leonardo da Vinci, Edison, Picasso, or Einstein. The next question is how do some individuals get to produce a greater amount of variation in the domain than others? The answer to this question is going to involve motivational and affective variables as well as cognitive ones. Researchers in Big-C creativity consider that this creative individual was naturally born with a high level of creative ability. It is likely that some children are born with more sensitivity to certain ranges of stimulation and therefore might be more likely to be considered more sensitive and creative (Gardner 1983).

In the 1960s, cognitive psychology was the major contributor to the understanding of creativity, and the acquisition/development of domain-specific skills was emphasized. In the 1980s, behavioral-genetics became the mainstream and a more balanced and broader perspective of creativity emerged (Velázquez, Segal, & Horwitz, 2015). Many scholars in neuroscience have been trying to determine the influence of genetic factors on

creativity with the studies focused on the genetic and neurobiological sources of the individual side of creativity (Reuter, Roth, Holve, & Henning, 2006). They strongly believe in the idea that “genius runs in families.” Researchers have also been exploring the inheritability of various creativity-related cognitive components. One such component related to creativity is divergent thinking (Vartanina, Bristol, & Kaufman, 2013). Nowadays, scholars examine both genetic and environmental factors for achieving creative outcomes.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Big-C

Focusing on Big-C and studying creative people who have had beneficial influences on their domains or fields should have significant meaning. They can be good specimens of creativity for other people who have not reached the Big-C level. Researchers in this area aim to discover the common grounds of genetic factors, behavioral patterns, environmental effects and personalities of these people and their impacts on our culture and society. From the perspective of apparel studies, research analyzes the factors that made successful fashion designers who have influenced and changed the fashion domain—such as Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Coco Chanel, Jean-Paul Gaultier, and Alexander McQueen. These can be examples for Big-C level study. The most powerful strength of the first creativity model is that it not only evaluates the persons who are creative, but also looks at their effect on specific domains or fields and their development.

However, a Big-C perspective might narrow down the boundary of creativity.

Csikszentmihalyi (2013) insisted that the core implication of his systems model is that “the level of creativity in a given place at a given time does not depend only on the amount of individual creativity. It depends just as much on how well suited the respective domains and fields are to the recognition and diffusion of novel ideas” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013, p. 31). Who can be a creative person today in terms of Big-C and Csikszentmihalyi’s creativity model? Steve Jobs may be an example. Then, people who try to create something similar or something different with what Steve Jobs created cannot be creative? Can’t Antonio Salieri, who was an Italian composer and a bitter rival of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who has been eulogized not only inside but also outside of his field and domain, be a creative person because his success was not as great as Mozart’s? We should ask ourselves whether it is necessary to confine individual creativity to only success or failure. Success and failure can be defined differently through examining different standpoints. Sometimes, some individuals and their works did not take center stage in their lifetime but later achieve great recognition and a lot of praise—van Gogh can be a good example. This shows that Big-C creativity has ambiguous criteria for creativity that can change over time. Also, this theoretical perspective cannot be used in an educational model since it implies that creativity cannot be enhanced, and an individual cannot be trained in a short period of time.

Little-c: Creativity as an Everyday Activity

According to Kaufman and Beghetto (2009), ‘little-c’ is a theory or concept that is more focused on everyday activities that the average person may participate in each day (Richards, Kinney, Benet, & Merzel, 1988). Studies that use a little-c approach often observe everyday creativity and can include investigations of ordinary people like college students or children. Researchers who prefer to study little-c creativity believe that creativity can be enhanced because all humans have unfulfilled potential. Plucker, Long and Runco (2011) argued that an individual cannot intentionally expand inborn potentialities but can maximize them. Creativity has cognitive, affective, attitudinal, and interpersonal components that can be manifested through a stimulating environment that induces ideas and creates solutions to problems.

Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT), developed by Ellis Paul Torrance and his associates in 1996 is one of the most generally used tests for measuring one’s creative level based on fluency, flexibility, and originality (Kim, 2006). Torrance (1972) conducted a review of 142 studies of creativity training for children and categorized nine types of creative thinking interventions (e.g. Creative Problem-solving programs, motivation and reward mechanisms, media and reading programs). Torrance concluded that the most successful approaches are those that involve both cognitive and emotional functioning, “provide adequate structure and motivation and give opportunities for involvement, practice and interaction with teachers and other children” (Torrance, 1972, p. 203). The skills, like perceiving, understanding, using, and regulating emotions in daily

life, are important aspects of creativity skill development (Ebert, Hoffmann, Ivcevic, Phan, & Brackett, 2015).

Amabile (1996)'s componential model of creativity is another theory that is grounded in little-c perspective. She argued that there are three variables needed for creativity to occur: Domain-relevant skills, Creativity-relevant skills, and Task motivation. Although these variables seem like they are derived from Big-C creativity, it is actually aimed more at everyday creativity. Domain-relevant skills are knowledge, technical skills, and specialized talent. For example, if you are going to be a creative fashion designer, you must understand the difference between prêt-à-porter (ready-to-wear) and haute couture. Creativity-relevant skills are more personal abilities that are associated with creativity. One example can be tolerance for ambiguity—can you handle not knowing how a project might turn out, or not knowing your plans for a weekend? Task motivation includes self-discipline and willingness to be a risk taker.

Since the 1980s, Robert Epstein has proposed Generativity Theory, a formal, empirically-based theory of the creative process (Epstein, Kaminaka, Phan, & Uda, 2013). Generativity Theory have suggested that creativity can be developed through specific skills, conditions, and even daily life activities. Epstein (1999) argued that the generative mechanisms that underlie creativity are universal, but variability is the rule in one's behavior. His studies have shown that everyone has roughly equal creative potential for learning, and practicing certain basic skills is the key for developing and realizing that potential. People solve various large and small problems every day either consciously or unconsciously. Although people do not recognize it, this activity enhances

their creativity. Epstein said, “This might sound ominous, but it's actually great news, because it means that creativity can be engineered - and that all of us can realize the enormous creative potential lying within us” (Epstein, 2008, June 23).

Strengths and Weaknesses of little-c

Little-c suggests a more general and broader concept of creativity so that it can cover diverse domains, phenomena, and individuals. The little-c perspective helps underline the importance of the role that creativity plays in everyday life and the importance of developing creativity in everyday settings such as schools and classrooms. The majority of scholars have acknowledged that creativity is trainable, and they have emphasized how it is important to explore daily creativity from a little-c perspective. Many scholars and educators have attempted to develop educational models for enhancing students' creativity. Especially, researchers in the design field are devoting study to effective ways of teaching and learning skills.

Based on the concept of Epstein's Generativity Theory that believes creativity can be trained, Im, Hokanson and Johnson (2015) conducted a longitudinal study on teaching creative thinking skills. In this study, researchers introduced how a creative problem-solving class was designed and implemented for enhancing retail merchandising students' creativity skills. Forty-five undergraduate students in the retail merchandising program at the University of Minnesota were trained in the class and took the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) at various times during the semester. The effects of creative problem-solving training on students were analyzed by their test scores. The results

showed that there was a significant effect of training creativity in the class. Besides an educational approach, research related to human behaviors and creativity can be conducted through the lens of little-c—i.e. How do people express their creativity through their dressing each day and the outfits they assemble? Can building and managing a capsule wardrobe be a training for improving one's creativity?

Creativity and Dressing Habits

In the aspect of little-c creativity, dressing is one of the important daily activities that has an impact on one's creativity. In previous studies, scholars and experts have shown that dressing affects the way of thinking and acting. Amabile (1989) classified child's creative behaviors by age. She introduced dressing as a creative action among 8 to 9-year-old children. She argued that children at these ages usually express their creativity through mix and matching fashion items in unusual ways. Csikszentmihalyi (2013) insisted that people could cultivate flow in their daily lives. People pay attention and concentrate when driving the car, staying awake at work, and dressing. However, without external force demanding that they concentrate, they could easily lose focus. He suggests: "wake up in the morning with a specific goal to look forward to" is one of daily based ways for cultivating flow every day. Csikszentmihalyi said,

"Most of us don't feel our actions are that meaningful. Yet everyone can discover at least one thing every day that is worth waking up for. It could be meeting a certain person, shopping for a special item, potting a plant, cleaning the office desk, writing a letter, trying on a new dress... The important thing is to take the easy first steps until you master the habit, and then slowly work up to more complex goals." (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013, p. 349)

Epstein (1999) argued that variability is the ‘rule’ in behavior. He gave the examples like—people never brush their teeth in the same way twice or repeat the exact same sentence in their conversations. Likewise, most people, except Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg and so on, do not wear the same ensemble of clothing every day. People feel a sense of accomplishment when they create a new outfit that they have never worn before.

A Concept of Sustainability in a Capsule Wardrobe Project

Over the last decade, sustainability has been pursued actively in various fields of study, especially in the field of apparel. Many scholars have discussed ‘what is sustainability?’, ‘what can be considered as sustainable design?’ and ‘why is sustainability important?’ People in the U.S. have begun to be concerned about sustainability and have started to recognize the importance and the seriousness of the problem. Not only do they have this awareness, but also they have started ‘doing’ something as consumers. A capsule wardrobe project is one such sustainable movement started in the U.S. recently. In this section, three issues will be discussed in depth: (1) Fast Fashion, Anti-Fast Fashion and Sustainability, (2) Origin and General Concept of Capsule Wardrobe, and (3) Capsule Wardrobe Projects in the U.S.

Fast Fashion, Anti-Fast Fashion and Sustainability

The emergence of fast fashion aroused various social, environmental and economic problems and it led to a great interest in sustainability. Fast fashion is low-cost

clothing collections based on the latest fashion trends and its fast-response system encourages disposability (Fletcher, 2008). SPA (Specialty store retailer of Private label Apparel) brands, such as Zara, H&M, Forever 21, and so on, only emphasize its low-cost and trendiness rather than the low quality which may result in disposal after a season (Jang, Ko, Chun, & Lee, 2012). Fast mass production and fast distribution changed the consumers' shopping and wearing habits. It instigated consumers to easily purchase and easily throw-away their clothes. People have been encouraged to buy multiple items of clothing at once and to wear for a short period of time. These clothes are often not being worn because of their low quality and outdated styles. In many cases, they are piled up in a wardrobe and often end up in the trash. This problem directly connects to increasing clothing and textile waste which is one of the serious environmental problems of today.

According to a report conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2016), in 2014, in the United States, about 258 million tons of municipal solid waste (MSW) were generated. More than 89 million tons of MSW were recycled and composted, equivalent to a 34.6 percent recycling rate. In addition, over 33 million tons of MSW were combusted with energy recovery and 136 million tons were landfilled. Rubber, leather and textiles accounted for more than nine percent of the total. In total, 24.43 million tons of rubber, leather and textiles ended up as waste and only 4.06 million tons were recycled while 14.61 million tons were landfilled.

As the problems of thoughtless consumption and textile waste have been brought up, the anti-fast fashion movements focused on sustainability like slow fashion, minimalism, and voluntary simplicity. Sustainability within fashion means “through the

development and use of a thing or a process, there is no harm done to people or the planet, and that thing or process, once put into action, can enhance the well-being of the people who interact with it and the environment it is developed and used within” (Hethorn, 2015, p. xxvii).

Fashion designers in the U.K have raised their voices to slow down the fast fashion cycle caused by the fast production and consumption to enrich the quality, value and sustainability (Jung & Jin, 2016). The concept of slow fashion was borrowed from the Slow Food Movement developed by Carlo Petrini in Italy in 1986. The main idea of the Slow Food movement was to associate pleasure and food with awareness and responsibility (Fletcher, 2007). In the same vein, Fletcher (2007) founded the concept of slow fashion by connecting pleasure and fashion with awareness and responsibility. Fletcher (2007) argued that although a high-quality apparel product costs more, it makes a consumer purchase fewer products, but higher in value. “Slow fashion is about choice, information, cultural diversity and identity. Yet, critically, it is also about balance. It requires a combination of rapid imaginative change and symbolic (fashion) expression as well as durability and long-term engaging, quality products” (Fletcher, 2007, p. 61).

The idea of voluntary simplicity was first introduced by Gregg. Gregg (1936) defined voluntary simplicity as having “singleness of purpose, sincerity and honesty within, as well as avoidance of exterior clutter, of many possessions irrelevant to the chief purpose of life” (Gregg, 1936, p. 4). Etzioni (1998) defined as “the choice out of free will ... to limit expenditures on consumer goods and services, and to cultivate non-materialistic sources of satisfaction and meaning” (Etzioni, 1998, p. 620). Craig-Lees and

Hill (2002) introduced five values of voluntary simplicity: (1) material simplicity, (2) humanism, (3) self-determination, (4) ecological awareness, and (5) personal growth.

DeLong, Goncu-Berk, Bye and Wu (2013) identified minimalism and voluntary simplicity as needing to include aesthetic appeal and not the “mistaken perception that clothing should be as functional and comfortable as possible with little regard for its aesthetic appeal and the user should be satisfied to buy as little as possible” (DeLong, Goncu-Berk, Bye, & Wu, 2013, p. 60).

These anti-fast fashion movements have one common concept of practicing sustainability through keeping things for a long time with recognizing its' value. They inspire consumers to eliminate excessive spending, concern about the quality more than the quantity, and be aware of social, environmental and economic problems deeply.

Origin and General Concept of Capsule Wardrobe

The term ‘capsule wardrobe’ was first introduced by Susie Faux in 1980. In 1973, she founded *Wardrobe*, a unique boutique in the West End of London. *Wardrobe* was a place that not only sells fashion, but also sells style and confidence. Susie Faux was known for introducing British women to new designers including Jil Sander and promoting minimalist aesthetics. Before she started her own business, she had already recognized the need for good quality clothing and creative styling for women through learning the importance of quality fashion from her parents and grandparents who were master ladies’ tailors. She published a book in 1998 titled ‘Wardrobe: Develop Your

Style & Confidence’ for helping women, especially the career women, to build and manage their wardrobes.

The basic concept of capsule wardrobe defined by Faux is “by building a capsule wardrobe you will buy fewer clothes of a higher quality that you will wear more often” (Faux, 2009, July 15). It is a minimal-sized personal wardrobe filled with essential, basic, classic and timeless items of clothing which can be worn regardless of the season. This concept was originally developed for the busy successful career woman to provide her with helpful guidelines on the strategies of getting dressed simply and easily while still looking good and professional. The main purpose of creating and managing capsule wardrobes was not just reducing the clothing items in the wardrobes, but also developing their own confident style as the wearer’s progress through their careers. “You will look and feel confident and successful because the quality will show and because you know that the overall look works. And never again will you have a cupboard stuffed full of clothes that you don’t wear and yet be unable to find anything to wear when you’ve got an important occasion” (Faux, 2009, July 15).

The concept of capsule wardrobe was introduced and became popular in the U.S. by American fashion designer Donna Karan in 1985 through her first collection ‘Seven Easy Pieces’ (see Figure 1 on the following page). Her collection was based on the essence of capsule wardrobe. The main goal of the collection was perfection, not quantity. Karan wanted to give an idea of having and managing a concise wardrobe with fewer items that are basic, classic and timeless so that they could be worn with any other

item(s). “Each item had to be flexible and ready to shift in attitude and purpose, depending on what you teamed it with” (Karan, 2015, p. 140).



Figure 1. Donna Karan’s ‘Seven Easy Pieces’ Collection in 1985. Adapted from InStyle, by E. Wilson, Retrieved from <http://www.instyle.com/news/history-donna-karan-seven-easy-pieces>

The collection had one constant foundation—black bodysuit and black tights. The first outfit was only the bodysuit and tights. From the second outfit to the rest, other items such as a wrap-and-tie skirt, a pair of loose trousers, a tailored jacket, a camel coat, a white shirt, and so on were added to this foundation and created new, interesting and creative outfits (Karan, 2015; Wilson, 2015, July 1). Karan said in the interview after the show, “So many women find assembling the right clothes bewildering today. They’ve discovered fast ways to put food on the table, but they do not know how to get their

wardrobes together easily” (Wilson, 2015, July 1). As Faux did, Karan emphasized the importance of women’s confidence based on the idea of capsule wardrobe. “And it had to accentuate the positive and delete the negative, because that gives you confidence. And for the urban woman, confidence was power” (Karan, 2015, p. 140).

In 2009, Faux updated and reintroduced the concept of capsule wardrobe through a series of articles on her website named *Confidence Tricks* (<http://confidencetricks.susiefaux.com/>). In the first article “Re-introducing the capsule wardrobe-part 1” (Faux, 2009, July 15), she introduced the basic rules of capsule wardrobe such as ‘Buy fewer, better quality clothes you’ll wear more often’, ‘Buy the best you can afford and end up spending less’, and ‘Go for neutral colours’. She also explained the elements of the definitive capsule wardrobe. She argued that a jacket is the most important piece that should be selected carefully. She emphasized that the choice of selecting right jacket(s) determines the success of the capsule wardrobe. Other than a jacket, a skirt, trousers—which could be part of a suit, a blouse, a sweater, shoes, tights, a coat or raincoat, a dress, a belt, jewelry, gloves and evening wear can be included. However, she did not specify the exact numbers of items in the capsule wardrobe. “I think the ideal size of your capsule will depend from person to person. There’s no hard and fast rules, here – the principle is that less is more so really what you’re trying to do is to make the most of your budget to create a working wardrobe with high quality clothes that will be sufficient for your lifestyle” (Faux, 2010, June 9).

Capsule Wardrobe Projects in the U.S.

Recently, various projects engaged with the concept of capsule wardrobe have been emerging in the U.S. Uniform Project™ started in May 2009 by Sheena Matheiken is a creative and meaningful challenge to wear the same little black dress (LBD) (see Figure 2) for 365 days as a part of sustainability practice as well as to support the Akanksha Foundation—a non-profit organization providing education to underprivileged children living in Indian slums. Sheena Matheiken does not wear her black dress in the same way every day. (see Figure 3) Although she ‘only’ wears this same dress for an entire year, she creates unique and interesting look every single day with matching with other clothing items and accessories (“How it all began”, n.d.).



Figure 2. The Little Black Dress (LBD) of Uniform Project™. Adapted from Uniform Project, by S. Matheiken, Retrieved from <http://theuniformproject.com/upweb/#!/about>



Figure 3. Variations of the Little Black Dress (LBD) in the Uniform Project™. Adapted from Uniform Project, by S. Matheiken, Retrieved from <http://theuniformproject.com/upweb/#!about>

Since 2009, this project attracted a lot of attention from various media like *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *CNN*, *BBC*, *Times London*, *LA Times*, *MSNBC*, *NPR*, *PBS*, *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *Marie Claire*, hundreds of fashion, culture and design blogs, as well as TV shows not only within the U.S. but also around the world. By the end of 2009, over 2 million people visited the website and donated over \$100,000. Also, Sheena Matheiken was chosen as one of *Elle Magazine*'s Women of the Year for 2009. The simple, creative, yet meaningful idea and value of the Uniform Project has inspired people around the world to join with this project ("How it all began", n.d.).

Another well-known capsule wardrobe challenge called Project 333 was started in 2010 by Courtney Carver with the slogan of "be more with less". It is a minimalist fashion challenge to live with 33—or fewer than 33—items of clothing kept in a

wardrobe for three months (see Figure 4). This project is more focused on voluntary simplicity. *“Be more with less is about simplifying your life and really living. Living with less creates time and space to discover what really matters. Through decluttering and focusing on the best things instead of all the things, you can create a life with more savings and less debt, more health and less stress, more space and less stuff, and more joy with less obligation”* (“Start here”, n.d.). Following are the specific rules of this project (“Project 333”, n.d.):

- When: Every three months (It’s never too late to start so join in anytime!)
- What: 33 items including clothing, accessories, jewelry, outerwear and shoes
- What not: these items are not counted as part of the 33 items – wedding ring or another sentimental piece of jewelry that you never take off, underwear, sleepwear, in-home lounge wear, and workout clothing (you can only wear your workout clothing to workout)
- How: Choose your 33 items, box up the remainder of your fashion statement, seal it with tape and put it out of sight
- What else: consider that you are creating a wardrobe that you can live, work and play in for three months. Remember that this is not a project in suffering. If your clothes don’t fit or are in poor condition, replace them.



Figure 4. Example of Capsule Wardrobe in Project 333. Adapted from Light by Coco, Retrieved from <https://lightbycoco.com/im-starting-project-333/>

While the Uniform Project™ creates a variety of outfits through adding a display of accessories which become the focal points, Project 333 focuses on creating different combinations of ensembles using the items in a wardrobe. It is like finding all the cases that you can find in math. For example, the same jeans can be paired with different tops—it can be a simple white T-shirt, or black sweater, or colorful blouse—so that they become various ensembles which show different moods. For that reason, usually basic items that can go easily with any kind of item are preferred. Also, it is critical to consider

the component proportions of top, bottom and accessories. As shown in Figure 5 below, there are more than 16 possible ensembles that can be created with 6 tops and 2 bottoms.

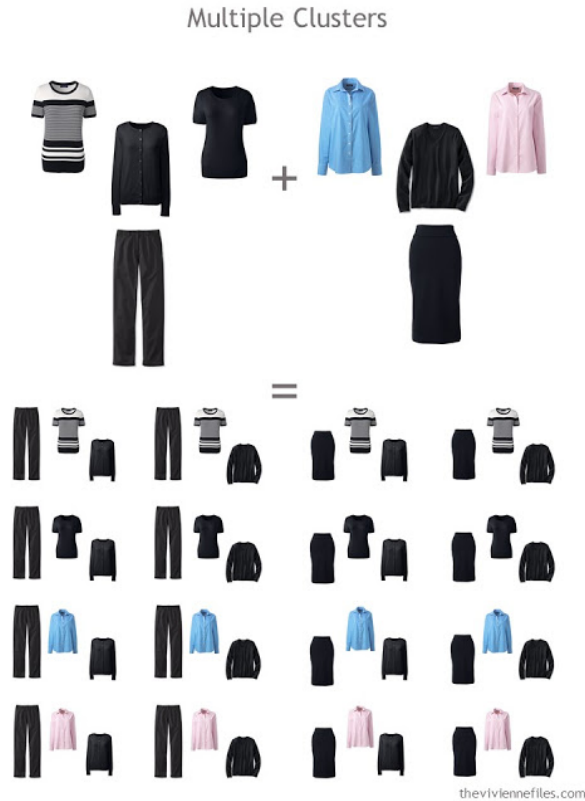


Figure 5. A Variety of Combinations in Capsule Wardrobe. Adapted from The Vivienne Files, Retrieved from <http://www.theviviennefiles.com/>

Other than making different combinations of items, transforming the item is another way of creating new outfits. For example, a brown ombre dress shown in Figure 6 is transformable in length. The participant who shared the strategies to build her winter capsule wardrobe on YouTube describes this dress as follow:

“And finally, I love wearing dresses so included this sheer brown ombre dress. And this is a wool blend jersey so it’s actually pretty warm. But what I really like about it is that it can be gathered to different length and worn like a tunic or a dress.” (My Green Closet, 2015, January 11)

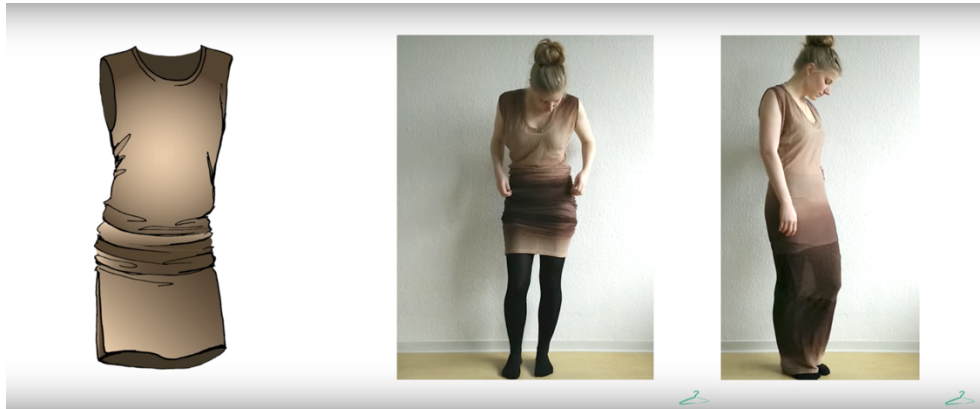


Figure 6. A Transformable Brown Ombre Dress. Adapted from My Green Closet, Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXKxGiZ17y8>

Participants of Project 333 like to take selfies of their daily outfit created by the limited items and share them through their social media like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The definition of the term ‘selfie’ is “an image that includes oneself and is taken by oneself using a digital camera especially for posting on social networks.” This term first appeared in written form in 2002 on an Australian news website and it was named by Oxford Dictionaries as a word of 2013. (“Selfie”, n.d.)

Carver and Project 333 have been featured on many national publications and TV shows including *BBC*, *CNN*, *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, *More Magazine*, and *Real Simple Magazine*. Carver has been traveling around the U.S. and giving lectures to people. In the lecture, she shares the story of Project 333, answers questions, and leads a discussion on dressing and living with less (“The Tiny Wardrobe Tour”, n.d.).

Since 2010, Carver has steadily uploaded the articles and guidelines to give the participants tips about managing their capsule wardrobes on her website. In her postings, she keeps emphasizing how creativity is an important source of building and managing a capsule wardrobe. She suggested “Play around and try new things, find style inspiration

that you can use with your wardrobe, follow other capsule wardrobe dressers on social media, and most importantly, feel good in your clothes” (Project 333, 2015, December 8).

There is no one who wears 33 items in the same way every day. Every morning they enjoy mix and matching their limited items. Participants sometimes mend and reform their items when they get bored with them (see Figure 7).



Figure 7. Photographic Records of Daily Outfits in Project 333. Adapted from Hark at Home, Retrieved from <https://harkathome.com/tag/project-333/>

Assumptions Based on Theory of Change (TOC)

Theory of Change (TOC) is “a theory-based approach to planning, implementing or evaluating change at an individual, organizational or community level” (Laing & Todd, 2015, p. 3). It can be used as a helpful tool for developing effective solutions to complex social problems like sustainability issues (Anderson, 2005). Traditional research approaches usually start from verifying certain hypotheses based on previous studies. However, many long-term projects, including a capsule wardrobe project, may have outcomes that are unexpected at the starting point, or that are very hard to define if they involve cultural, social, economic, environmental, and educational change. Laing and Todd (2015) argued that participants of projects are usually very aware of all the things they are doing, but the steps and processes of change to impact are not often clearly articulated or seen by them. Therefore, various methods, such as a thorough literature review, documentary analysis, observation, individual/group interviews, visual and participatory methods, and so on, should be used in order to track those steps. As a result, following a process called TOC helps both individual and society to deeply understand the problem(s) that they face and the long-term goal(s) that they need to achieve while providing clear pictures of the steps required to reach that goal(s). TOC is accomplished by “exploring the real-world setting in which the project is being implemented, the starting situation, and risks or opportunities that may influence achieving change, the actions to be taken and the steps of change expected to take place” (Laing & Todd, 2015, p. 4). According to Laing and Todd (2015), there are five processes (or characteristics) of TOC. The first process of TOC is ‘the starting situation’. This process addresses what a

problem is like now and why. The second process is ‘stands of action’. It explains activities/actions that are going to address the problem. The third process is ‘intended outputs’. In this step, ‘what people (or participants) will need to do differently’ should be answered. The fourth phase is ‘steps of change’. In this phase, how things will change is described. The final step is ‘intended outcomes’. Researchers need to predict and discuss how the starting situation will change through following the previous steps.

Since the main objective of this study is to discuss the motivations, processes, benefits, and limitations voiced by subjects participating in a capsule wardrobe project, the project needs to be looked at holistically. Adapted from the TOC, there will be five gradational stages under two large categories in this study. The first category is ‘Implementation’. Under the ‘Implementation’, there are three stages: (1) The Starting Situation; (2) Stands of Action; (3) Intended Outputs. ‘The Starting Situation’ shows the motivation of participating in a capsule wardrobe project. As mentioned, social, environmental and economic problems due to fast fashion production and consumption cycles have become the conversation topic. This great focus on the sustainable issues extends to participating in a capsule wardrobe project. While participating in this project, a participant may master four core competencies that are derived from various aspects of Epstein’s Generativity Theory: (1) Challenging (seeks challenges); (2) Capturing (preserve new ideas); (3) Broadening (broaden skills and knowledge); (4) Surrounding (change physical and social environment) (see Figure 1 for format).

The second category, ‘Results’, has two stages including ‘Steps of change’ and ‘Intended outcomes’. ‘Steps of change’ shows short-term changes while ‘Intended

outcomes' suggests long-term effects. The short-term outcomes that are expected from this project are the reduction of excessive consumption and development of one's own creative dressing habits. Benefits and limitations are two intended long-term outcomes. The main benefits of the capsule wardrobe project may be to contribute to sustainable development through decreasing clothing and textile waste and enhance individual's creativity at the level of little-c. Expected limitations such as boredom with items and constraints of style, event, weather, activity can be discovered in the process (See Figure 8 on the next page).

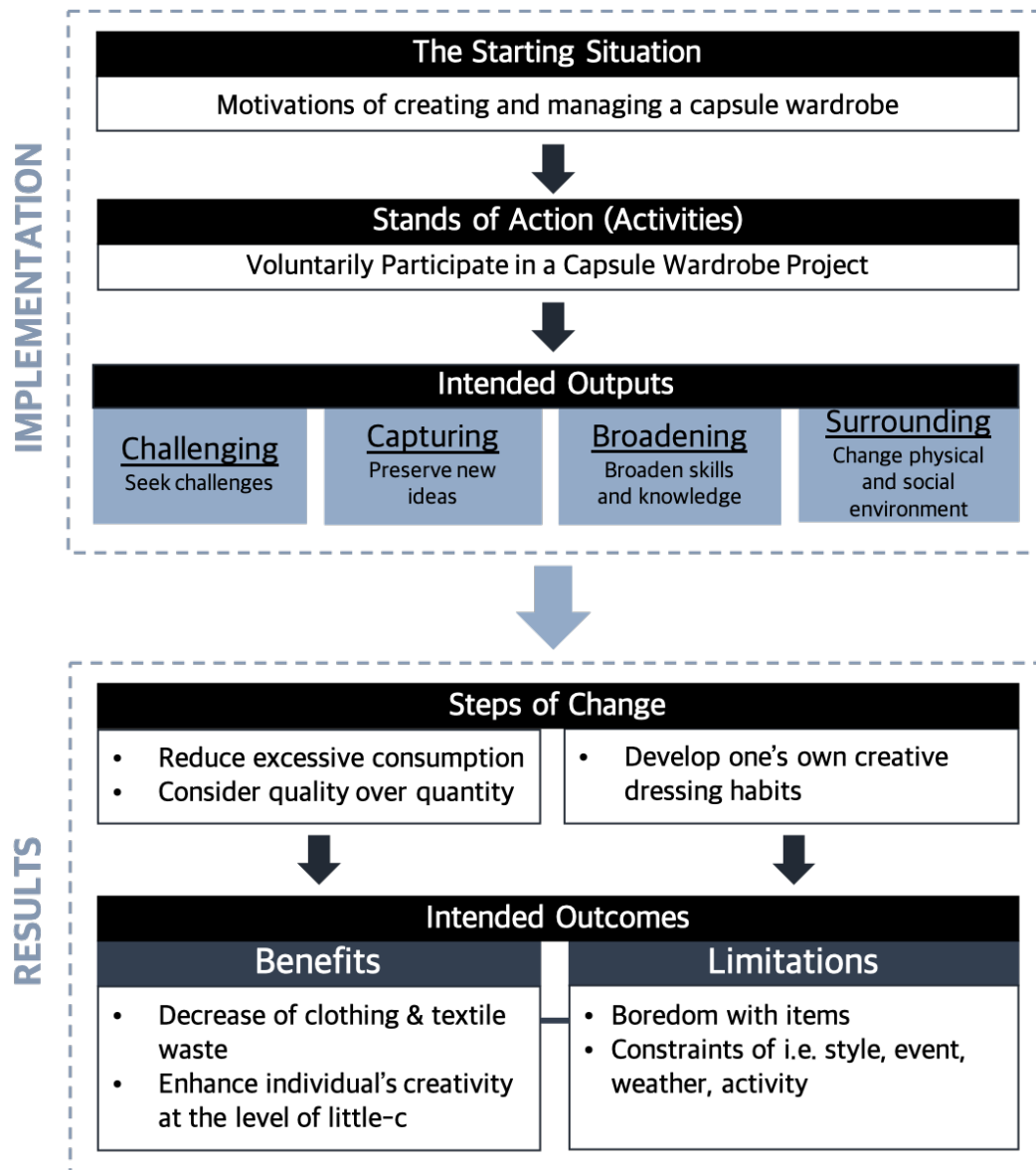


Figure 8. A Conceptual Model of a Capsule Wardrobe Project based on Theory of Change

Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 covered the following two sections based on the review of literature:

(1) A concept of Creativity and (2) A Concept of Sustainability in a Capsule Wardrobe Project.

In the first section, the concepts of Big-C and little-c creativity, strengths and weaknesses of both, and creativity and dressing habits were discussed. Big-C creativity is eminent creativity. Studying people who have had significant beneficial influences on their domains or fields is considered as a Big-C approach. People at the level of Big-C can be good role models for those who have not reached the Big-C level. However, this biased perspective might narrow the boundary of creativity.

On the other hand, little-c creativity is more focused on activities that the average person may participate in each day. Researchers who study little-c creativity have an assumption that individuals can be trained to be creative since all humans have potential creativity. Little-c suggests a more general and broad concept of creativity so that it can cover diverse domains, phenomena, and individuals.

In the aspect of little-c creativity, dressing is an important daily activity that has an impact on one's creativity. Several scholars including Amabile, Csikszentmihalyi and Epstein argued that dressing affects one's way of thinking and acting, and it has a direct effect on developing one's problem-solving skill which is a sine qua non of creativity development. Since this study focuses on how daily activities like dressing can affect one's creativity, little-c creativity rather than Big-C will be discussed.

The second section covered the concept of sustainability and a capsule wardrobe.

Sustainability became a critical issue after the emergence of fast fashion. Fast fashion shortened fashion production and the distribution cycle as well as product lifecycle. Consumers thoughtlessly purchase and discard their clothes more often and it brought about various social, environmental and economic problems. As a reverberation of fast fashion, slow fashion, minimalism and voluntary simplicity which are known as anti-fashion movements began to appear. These anti-fast fashion movements encourage consumers to reduce excessive consumption, concern about the quality more than the quantity, and be aware of sustainable problems more deeply.

Recently, various projects engaged with the concept of capsule wardrobe have been emerging in the U.S. The concept of capsule wardrobe has a thread of connection with these anti-fast fashion movements. The main idea of a capsule wardrobe is to urge people to buy fewer apparel products of higher quality so that they will be worn more often and for a longer time. Several capsule wardrobe projects like Project 333 do not only let people experience sustainable practice, but also help them to develop their individual styles and confidence. Moreover, creating new outfits every day through playing around with the limited items of the capsule wardrobe provides people with an opportunity to enhance their creativity by facilitating little-c.

Based on the framework of Theory of Change (TOC), the researcher assumed that the short-term outcomes that are expected from this capsule wardrobe project are (1) a reduction of excessive consumption and (2) development of one's own creative dressing habits. The long-term benefits can be (1) contribution to sustainable development

through decreasing clothing and textile waste and slowing down fashion cycle, and (2) enhancement of individual creativity at the level of little-c. Expected limitations include boredom with items and constraints of style, event, weather, activity.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This is a case study that examines personal experiences of a capsule wardrobe with volunteer participants. This study seeks to explore the motivations, perceived benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe and how they are connected to sustainability and creativity. To understand these aspects, three research questions are addressed as follows:

(1) *What patterns—i.e., in the manipulation of garments and the visual result—emerge for creating different ensembles with limited items?*

(2) *How does the daily practice of dressing with a capsule wardrobe affect one's creativity?*

(3) *What do participants perceive are the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe—i.e. motivation for engaging in the activity, interest in sustainability?*

Based on these research questions, this chapter includes (a) rationale for research approach and design, (b) research sample, (c) data collection methods, (d) analysis of data, (e) ethical considerations.

Rationale for Research Approach and Design

This case study focuses on several aspects behind the phenomenon of a capsule wardrobe project experienced by volunteer participants. The main purpose is to

understand (1) emerged dressing patterns for creating different ensembles with limited items; (2) the influence of practicing a capsule wardrobe on one's creativity; and (3) motivations, benefits and limitations perceived by participants from the capsule wardrobe experiences.

In order to answer the complicated research questions of this study, multiple data collection methods were used to achieve methodological triangulation that uses a variety of methods for credibility and validity of the results. Mixed methods including an online survey, creativity tests, daily journals and in-depth interviews were used. Analysis included both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Qualitative methodology is a research method that aims to produce a result through in-depth analysis instead of a quantifying or statistical approach. It focuses on observing 'how' people (or animals) act and investigating 'why' they act like that. As Yin (2016) emphasized, it is important to understand the 'real-world settings' and 'different circumstances' that people belong to instead of a controlled, laboratory setting. Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) also described the reason for doing qualitative research as "to understand how people cope in their real-world settings" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 3) Qualitative approaches allow researchers to study and understand various people, their thoughts, and the circumstances in their everyday lives.

However, qualitative methods usually have challenges of validity while quantitative methods have difficulty delving deeply into a subject. Recently, many researchers prefer to use mixed methods more than only conducting either quantitative or qualitative study because using mixed methods have more benefits. Mixed methods

augment the strengths and compensate for the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative methods and help to solve more complicated research problems.

Since this study has complex research questions, mixed-methods research design of online survey, creativity test, daily journals and in-depth interviews were used.

Research Sample

The study used both purposive and volunteer sampling methods. The researcher attended several classes provided by the College of Design at the University of Minnesota and briefly introduced the research to students. Students who voluntarily wanted to engage in this study gave their names and contact information to the researcher. The flyer was distributed to students in these classes via email with the permission of professors and instructors of classes (Appendix A).

Seven volunteer participants were recruited and selected based upon the following criteria:

- (1) junior or senior students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota*
- (2) females living in Minnesota and who have lived in the U.S. at least 10 years*
- (3) no previous experience of creating and managing their own capsule wardrobes*
- (4) be willing to participate voluntarily in the research*

First, participants were students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota. They were either junior or senior students majoring in Apparel Design or

Retail Merchandising. The expected age range of the participants was from 18 to 30.

Accessibility was the biggest reason for selecting the participants among the students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota. Also, participants should have enough interest in creativity and sustainability to be motivated to complete the project.

Second, participants were all female because gender of the participants can create variables. It was necessary to control variables to minimize external factors that may affect the results. Although this study did not aim to standardize the cases, there would be differences in the capsule wardrobes between the genders.

Third, all participants had no previous experiences of participating in a capsule wardrobe project before they participated in this study. This criterion allowed them to have unbiased views on their experience of the capsule wardrobe.

Fourth, participants were individuals who voluntarily participated in the research. In order to understand the motivations of creating a capsule wardrobe, spontaneity was considered a most important criterion of selecting the participants.

Data Collection Methods

Seven volunteer participants in this study engaged in the 8-week capsule wardrobe project. They created their own capsule wardrobes with 33 or fewer items of clothing and lived with those items for seven weeks. It was their challenge to create a different outfit every day by mixing and matching their limited items. Participants kept a record of their outfits each day by taking selfies and documenting the items worn and journaling about their thoughts. Through practicing this daily activity, each participant

could have a better understanding of the concept of a capsule wardrobe including its strengths and weaknesses.

To attain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon behind the study, it was necessary to conduct multiple data collection methods and triangulation (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). In this regard, various methods of data collection included an online-survey, two creativity tests, daily journals and two in-depth interviews.

Online Survey

Before engaging in the project, participants were asked to take an online survey (APPENDIX B). The survey consisted of different types of questions such as 7-Point-Likert-scale questions, multiple-choice questions, and fill-in-the-blank questions. It took approximately 15 minutes or less. The reason for the survey was to understand each participant more deeply and have enough information about their personal backgrounds. Participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers.

The survey was composed of four sections: *(1) demographic information; (2) shopping habits; (3) personal wardrobe strategies; and (4) understanding of concepts of sustainability and capsule wardrobe.*

(1) Demographic information: This section asked age, major, college year, ethnicity and the length of residence in the U.S. of each participant.

(2) Shopping habits: In this section, participants were asked to respond to questions related to their shopping habits, i.e., ‘*How often do you purchase new clothing?*’, ‘*What motivates you to purchase new clothing and accessories?*’,

‘What is your average monthly clothing expense?’ , ‘Where do you usually shop your clothes?’ , ‘When you purchase new clothing, what do you consider the most?’

(3) Personal wardrobe strategies: This section was designed for understanding the personal wardrobe strategies of participants. There were questions like *‘How often do you rearrange clothing and accessories in your wardrobe?’*, *‘What is a rule for rearranging clothing and accessories in your wardrobe?’*, *‘How often do you discard clothing in your wardrobe?’*, *‘Are there certain shapes(silhouettes) or colors or materials or brands of clothing that you prefer to wear?’*, and *‘Are there certain shapes (silhouettes) or colors or materials or brands of clothing that you avoid wearing?’*

(4) Sustainability and capsule wardrobe: The degree of interest and understanding of sustainability and a capsule wardrobe were asked in this section. In the 7-Point-Likert-Scale questions, participants were asked to score their level of agreement with the following statements—7 was ‘Strongly Agree’ and 1 was ‘Strongly Disagree’: *‘I am interested in sustainability’*, *‘I understand the concept of sustainability clearly’*, *‘When I purchase new clothing, I consider sustainability’*, *‘I believe that keeping the items in my wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice’*, *‘I try not to purchase new clothing for reducing textile waste’*. There were questions like *‘How long do you usually keep the following categories of clothing?’* and participants were asked how many years they wear each category of clothing—i.e. T-shirt, blouse/shirt, dress, skirt, pants,

jacket, outer, suit, and accessories. Participants were also asked to answer, ‘*How do you dispose of your old or unwanted clothes?*’ Also, there were questions related to the capsule wardrobes: ‘*Have you ever heard about a capsule wardrobe project? If yes, please describe how you heard about it*’ and ‘*Please describe your definition of capsule wardrobe*’.

Creativity Tests

To assess the level of creativity, participants were asked to take a creativity test—the Epstein Creativity Competencies Inventory for Individuals (or ECCI-i)—before the project began and after the project ended.

ECCI-i developed by Robert Epstein approaches daily life activity to measure one’s creativity. Participants took an unabridged online version of ECCI-i. There are 28 questions evenly divided to measure each of the four areas that help people express their creativity (Epstein, Schmidt & Warfel, 2008): (1) Preserves New Ideas, (2) Seeks Challenges, (3) Broadens Skills and Knowledge and (4) Changes Physical and Social Environment. Participants gave their answers on a 5-point Likert-type scale labeled agree (5) and disagree (1) at the extremes. Participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers.

Daily Journals

Journaling was a key data collection method for this study. Participants were asked to record the whole process of their capsule wardrobe projects. In the first week of

the 8-week capsule wardrobe project, participants were asked to select 33 or fewer items of clothing for their capsule wardrobes. After the items were selected, participants were asked to photograph each item, assign a number for each item and create an item list (Appendix C). The items selected included all kinds of clothing, shoes and bags but did not include accessories and jewelry like hats, scarves, belts, earrings, necklaces. Then, participants were asked to document how long they spent creating their capsule wardrobes, what the strategies of selecting items were, whether they were satisfied with their capsule wardrobes, and any other thoughts and feelings they had (Appendix D).

After completing the creation of their capsule wardrobes, participants began to create their outfits with the limited items in their capsule wardrobes each day for seven weeks. They were asked to take a selfie of an outfit either in the morning or in the evening. Participants were asked to fill out the daily journal in MS Word at the end of the day (Appendix E). This included assigned numbers of items worn in the outfit, whether they created a new ensemble of clothing, and whether they liked the outfit or not. If there was a valid reason for skipping the journaling, i.e. traveling, staying at home all day, etc., the reason should be described. Daily journals with selfies were sent to the researcher once every two weeks. The researcher monitored the activities by staying in touch with participants who were all taking classes in the college.

In the 5th week of the project, participants had an opportunity to reorganize their capsule wardrobes. If the participant had fewer than 33 items, she could add more—up to 33. Also, it was possible to take out some items and substitute new ones. However, the numbers of reorganized items could not be more than five. Participants were asked to

document which items they updated and why they did that (Appendix F). Their item lists were also updated.

In-depth Interviews

Two in-depth interviews were conducted in this study. The first interview occurred in the first week of the project right after participants completed the creation of their capsule wardrobes. Interviews were done individually. All the contents of the interviews were recorded by mobile phone recorder and field notes were taken.

- (1) Pre-Interview:** After creating their capsule wardrobe, participants were asked for their first in-depth interview between October 26, 2017 and November 2, 2017. In this pre-interview, participants were asked about self-assessment of their creativity, motivations of participating in the project, and expectations for the challenge (Appendix G). Interviews were conducted individually in 205 McNeal Hall at the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. They were recorded on a mobile phone recorder and field notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews. The interview consisted of nine open-ended questions and took approximately 30 minutes. Participants had the right to refuse to respond to questions that they did not feel comfortable answering.
- (2) Post-Interview:** The second in-depth interview was conducted after the 8-week capsule wardrobe project ended between December 12, 2017 and December 14, 2017. As with the first interview, each was done individually in

205 McNeal Hall on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. The interview consisted of 13 open-ended questions and took approximately 30 minutes. The purpose of this post-interview was to understand the overall impression and personal experiences of managing a capsule wardrobe of participants. This interview included questions about wardrobe strategies participants learned through the project, perceived benefits and limitations of the project, a change in the degree of interest and understanding of sustainability (Appendix H). Interviews were recorded on a mobile phone recorder and field notes were taken by the researcher. Again, participants had the right to refuse to answer any questions that they did not want to answer.

The following Figure 9 on the next page shows the procedures of the project:

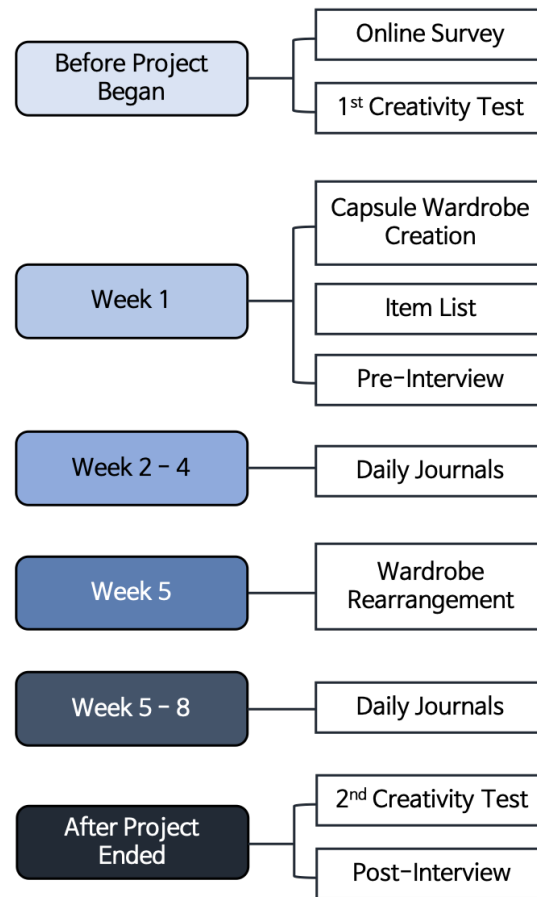


Figure 9. The Procedure of the Research Project

Analysis of Data

This research focuses on the study of a capsule wardrobe project as a specific phenomenon in our society and culture and how it influences the wearer. The focus was on why or why not people might create a capsule wardrobe, what benefits and limitations could be addressed, and how a capsule wardrobe project was related to sustainability and creativity.

The purpose of the case study is to describe more than one case in depth in order to respond to the research questions. The case study approach considers the individual as

the unit of analysis and is used to develop rich and comprehensive understandings about people and circumstances (Zucker, 2009). The case study “deals directly with the individual case in its actual context and gets as close to the subject of interest as possible, partly by means of direct observation in natural settings, partly by their access to subjective factors like thoughts, feelings, and desires.” (Bromley, 1986, pp. xi & 23)

From the online survey and creativity tests, which were designed for collecting demographic and numerical data, quantitative analysis was implemented. Participants’ age, education level, major, and ethnicity were recorded and shown in a table. The mean values of Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions of the online survey were calculated. The scores of two creativity tests were compared and used to support the findings from daily journals and in-depth interviews. According to the score analysis, the association between a capsule wardrobe and creativity was presented.

By using qualitative analysis methods, data obtained from daily journals and in-depth interviews were analyzed thoroughly. Daily journals that participants documented each day for eight weeks were collected and coded. Self-taken pictures of their outfits and assigned items used in the ensembles were visually analyzed.

All the recorded contents of the interviews were transcribed. The transcriptions were organized in tabular form (using a Microsoft Excel sheet). Using the table of transcriptions and the field notes taken by the researcher during the interviews, certain words that are both frequent and significant were searched and highlighted. After that, these data were categorized, and the categories were narrowed to respond to the research questions. Through qualitative analysis, the connection between a capsule wardrobe and

sustainability, motivations of doing a capsule wardrobe project, and benefits and limitations of the project were discussed in depth.

The Figure 10 below shows how each data collection method was connected to research questions:

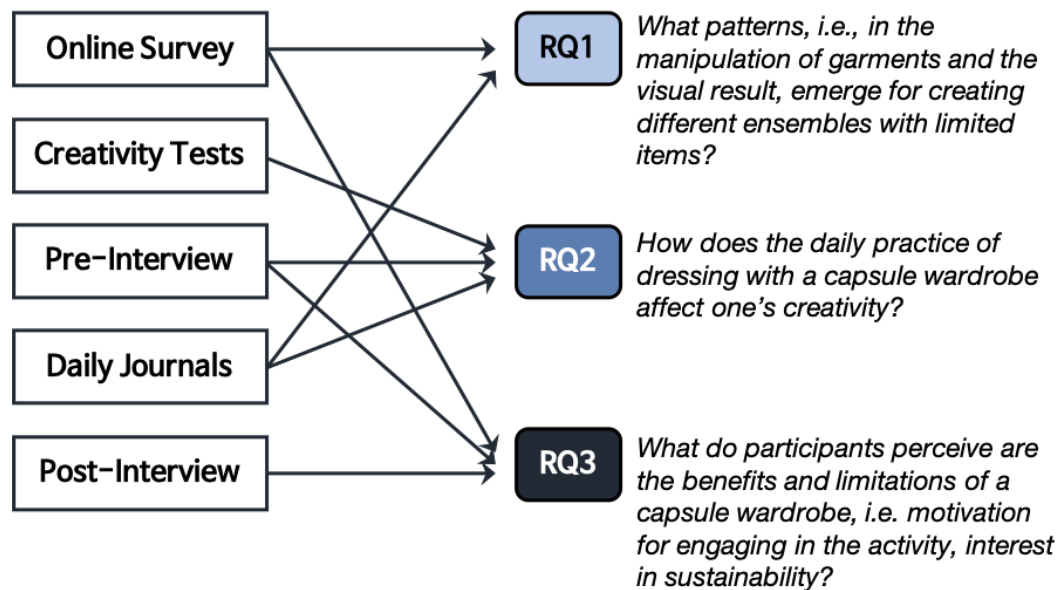


Figure 10. Relations Among Data Collection Methods and Research Questions

Compensation to Participants

Since this 8-week capsule wardrobe required time consuming and demands to participants, compensation was given to participants. It was given at various points in the 8-week project through email in order to motivate them to stay with the project to the end. Participants received eGifts Cards (Amazon/Target/Wholefoods) worth \$200 as an incentive for their participation. This compensation was funded by the Design Graduate Program in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota.

- (1) **First Compensation:** The first compensation of \$50 was given to participants after they completed the online survey, creating their capsule wardrobes, first creativity test and pre-interview.
- (2) **Second Compensation:** Participants received another \$50 of eGift Cards in compensation for reorganizing their capsule wardrobes in the 6th week.
- (3) **Third Compensation:** After the project ended, the final compensation worth \$100 was provided to participants for the completion of the project.

Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the research, ethical issues were carefully considered. The researcher received approval for the study from the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board (IRB) to protect participants from any possible ethical issues. Prior to all the activities including survey, tests, journaling and in-depth interview, participants were fully informed of the purpose and procedure of study and provided the consent form based upon IRB approval. Before the study began, participants were asked to carefully read and sign the form and can ask any questions or share their concern about the research. Participants' personal information was kept confidential. All data were stored securely and unauthorized personnel were not allowed access.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described in detail the research methodology of this study. This study recruited participants by using purposive and volunteer sampling methods. Seven participants who met the following criteria were engaged in this study: (1) junior or senior students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota; (2) females living in Minnesota and who have lived in the U.S. at least 10 years; (3) have no previous experience of creating and managing their own capsule wardrobes; (4) be willing to participate voluntarily in the research.

This study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to answer the complicated research questions. Quantitative data collected from the online survey and creativity tests were analyzed and used to interpret qualitative data collected by daily journal and pre-and-post-interviews. The study was supported by data triangulation.

In order to answer the three research questions, multiple data collection methods were used.

Before the project began, participants were asked to take an online survey. Data from the online survey included demographics, shopping habits, wardrobe strategies and the degree of interest and understanding of sustainability of participants.

During the eight weeks of the project, participants were asked to record in their daily journals. In the first week of eight weeks, participants were asked to create their capsule wardrobes that included 33 or fewer items of clothing and created the item lists; a number was assigned to each item. Right after completing the creation of the capsule wardrobes, participants were asked to document how long they spent creating their

capsule wardrobes, what the strategies of selecting items were, and whether they were satisfied with their capsule wardrobes. From the second week to the end, participants were asked to create their daily outfits with limited items in their capsule wardrobes. For seven weeks, they took selfies of their daily outfits, documented the items worn in the outfits, and shared their thoughts on the outfits every day. Based on the data from daily journals, patterns that emerged from participants in creating their ensembles were analyzed and the first research question was answered.

To determine any changes in the level of creativity of each participant happened through practicing the capsule wardrobes, participants were asked to take ECCI-i creativity tests before starting the project and after the project ended. The scores of these two creativity tests were compared, and the results were used to support the findings from daily journals and pre-interview. These data were used to answer the second research question of the study.

Two in-depth interviews were conducted. The pre-interview was completed in the first week of the project after participants created their capsule wardrobes. This interview was mainly focused on a self-assessment of creativity, motivations of engaging in the project, and expectations for the challenge. The data from the pre-interview were analyzed to answer the second and third research questions. The post-interview was done after the project ended. This interview was used to understand the wardrobe strategies participants learned through the project, perceived benefits and limitations of the project, a change in the degree of interest and understanding of sustainability that participants experienced through practicing use of their capsule wardrobes.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS FROM ONLINE SURVEY AND PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

Introduction

Since the main purpose of this study is to understand the experience of the individuals participating in the capsule wardrobe project, it is necessary to investigate each individual in depth.

Before examining the research questions, this chapter describes findings from an online survey and a profile of each participant. The data was collected from an online survey which was conducted before the project began. Based on the online survey data, profiles of participants including demographic information, shopping habits, wardrobe strategies, and understanding of concepts of sustainability and capsule wardrobe of each participant were analyzed.

This data supports the findings from daily journals and in-depth interviews that answer the first and third research questions of this study.

Findings from Online Survey

Before the 8-week capsule wardrobe project began, participants were asked to take an online survey (see Appendix B). The survey was composed of four sections: (1) Demographic Information; (2) Shopping Habits; (3) Wardrobe Strategies; and (4) Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe. The survey consisted of 7-Point-Likert-scale questions, multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank

questions. The reason for the survey was to understand each participant more deeply and have enough information about her personal background. There were no right or wrong answers.

Demographic Information

Seven participants were all female students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota. They all have lived in the U.S. from birth. They were born between 1990 and 1996 and the average age was 22 years. Two participants were junior students and all others were seniors. Two participants were majoring in Apparel Design while five participants were majoring in Retail Merchandising. Six of seven were Caucasians and the other one was Asian. (Table 1)

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

	Year of Birth	College Year	Major	Race	Year of Residence in the U.S.
P 1	1995	Senior	Apparel Design	White	22
P 2	1990	Junior	Apparel Design	White	27
P 3	1996	Senior	Retail Merchandising	White	21
P 4	1996	Junior	Retail Merchandising	White	21
P 5	1996	Senior	Retail Merchandising	Asian	21
P 6	1995	Senior	Retail Merchandising	White	22
P 7	1996	Senior	Retail Merchandising	White	21

Profiles of Participants

(1) Participant-1

Shopping Habits: Participant-1 purchases new clothing every three months. She spends less than \$50 for monthly clothing expenses. She only purchases new clothing when her clothes are worn-out. She likes to shop for her clothes at vintage or second-hand stores, local boutiques and fair-trade companies. When she purchases new clothing, she first considers sustainability and ethical issues and second, the quality of fabric. She does not consider following the latest trends.

Wardrobe Strategies: She prefers to wear neutral colors, cotton, wool but avoids wearing neon colors, polyester and fast fashion brands. She rearranges clothing and accessories in her wardrobe once a month and discards the items in her wardrobe once a year. She arranges her wardrobe by categories of items, i.e. shirts, sweaters, pants, jackets.

Wearing Time: Participant-1 wears her T-shirts, blouses or shirts, dresses, skirts, accessories five years or more and keeps pants, jackets, outer wear and suits ten years or more. She keeps her old or no-longer worn clothes in her wardrobe, hands down to younger family members, or mends and repairs.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Participant-1 has a great interest and profound understanding of sustainability. She gave 7 points-Strongly Agree-to all the questions related to sustainability (See Table 2).

She had heard about capsule wardrobes and had been interested in trying the 15 x 30 Challenge through Seek United, where you wear 15 items-including shoes-for a month. She defined the capsule wardrobe as "*A collection of pieces that can be worn together in a*

variety of combinations. The pieces should be of high quality and have unique importance to the wearer."

(2) Participant-2

Shopping Habits: Participant-2 likes to shop at vintage or second-hand stores, discount stores like Target and outlet stores such as Annex, Opitz and TJ Maxx. She purchases new clothing every six months and spends \$50-100 per month for clothing. Worn-out clothes, boredom with styles and sale or discount promotions motivate her to purchase new clothing and accessories. When buying new clothing, she first considers price and versatility. She owns a variety of brands and does not insist on brand value.

Wardrobe Strategies: Participant-2 likes to wear looser silhouettes rather than form fitting shirts, dresses or skirts. She wears mostly blue, black and a pop of color—usually coral or pink—but not many other warm colors. She prefers to wear rayon and cotton blends and tries to buy only cashmere sweaters from second-hand stores with discounted prices. She avoids wearing synthetics. She does not shop at SPA (Specialty retailer of Private label Apparel)/fast fashion brands like H&M, Forever 21 and Gap. She rearranges her wardrobe once a week, but she does not discard clothing items often. She discards from her wardrobe once every several years. She arranges the wardrobe by category, by season and by how often she wears clothing.

Wearing Time: She keeps T-shirts, blouses or shirts, or skirts for about three years, dresses and pants for four years, jackets and outer wear for eight years and accessories for more than ten years. For old or unwanted clothes, she usually keeps in her wardrobe,

donates to charity, hands down to younger family members, mends and repair, or finds other ways to use them; as a rag, towel for her hair, window washing.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Participant-2 is also interested in sustainability (See Table 2). She had read about a capsule wardrobe in magazines and blogs and she had heard about such projects for a long time. Her definition of capsule wardrobe was “*One that is tightly edited to contain a limited amount of pieces- often classics or ‘essential’ items that can be mixed and matched and worn in different ways.*”

(3) Participant-3

Shopping Habits: Participant-3 purchases new clothes once a month and her average monthly clothing expense is \$100-200. She prefers to shop at discount stores as well as local or foreign boutiques. The quality of fabric and price are factors to consider first, whereas she claimed she is not conscious of latest trends.

Wardrobe Strategies: Participant-3 likes to wear loose fitting tops with tight skinny jeans. Most of her items are neutrals with cool tones. She prefers to wear clothing made of soft and comfortable materials. There is no certain brand that she prefers but she states that she avoids wearing Forever 21. She organizes her wardrobe by category, silhouette, season and how frequency of wearing. Once a month, she reorganizes her wardrobe and discards the clothes that she no longer wears.

Wearing Time: She usually wears pants for six years, dresses and skirts for five years, T-shirt, blouses or shirts and outer wear for four years, jackets for three years, suits

for two years and accessories for one year. She donates to charity or gives to her friends if she has clothes that she does not like to wear any more.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Participant-3 strongly agreed that she understands the concept of sustainability clearly. She agreed that she is interested in sustainability so that she tried not to purchase new clothing to reduce textile waste but she somewhat disagreed that keeping the items in her wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice (See Table 2).

She was not sure whether she had heard about a capsule wardrobe. She defined it as “*Minimal pieces of clothing. Timeless and not trendy but rather what you feel best in. Not trying to fit in.*”

(4) Participant-4

Shopping Habits: Participant-4 shops once a week which is more often than other participants. She spends an average of \$50-100 for clothing every month. She shops at various types of apparel stores such as discount stores, vintage or second-hand stores, fast fashion brand stores like Forever 21 and internet shopping malls. When purchasing her clothing, she first considers versatility so that she can mix and match her items and then she considers the shapes and silhouettes that flatter her body. However, the quality of fabric and the trends are not important factors that she cares about when she purchases new clothing.

Wardrobe Strategies: Participant-4 usually wears maroon, blue, white and neutrals but not yellow, peach and bright colors. Madewell, J. Crew, Old Navy are her favorite

brands. She does not have a specific preference in materials. She rearranges her wardrobe once a week and discards clothing and accessories once a month. Her wardrobe is organized by category, color and season.

Wearing Time: She wears accessories for seven years whereas T-shirts, skirts, pants are usually worn for a year. Blouses or shirts and dresses are worn for three years on average and jackets, suits and outer wear are kept for more than four years. When she has old or unwanted clothes, she keeps them in her wardrobe, donates to charity, gives to younger family members, or sells on Poshmark, Buffalo Exchange and Platos Closet.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Participant-4 agreed that she considers herself to be environmentally conscious and prefers to purchase an item of clothing that she described as ‘sustainable’, ‘organic’, ‘eco-friendly’ or ‘ethical’. She somewhat disagreed that keeping things in her wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice (See Table 2).

She knew about a capsule wardrobe through a documentary about minimalism and she defined the capsule wardrobe as “*Basic pieces that can be easily mixed and matched. They're also classics that stay in style for many years.*”

(5) Participant-5

Shopping Habits: A new fashion trend and sale or discount promotion motivates Participant-5 to purchase new clothing items. She shops once a month and spends \$100-200. She purchases her clothes from different types of stores including department stores, internet shopping malls, fast fashion brand stores and local boutiques. She cares about

shapes and silhouettes of clothes the most and then brand value. However, she does not care whether the colors go with her skin and hair color.

Wardrobe Strategies: Participant-5 likes to wear cropped pants or jeans because she is short, she said. She does not like tight fitting tops and low-rise pants. She wears neutrals, dark green and blues but not bright colors, pink, red, and orange. For material, she prefers denim, vegan leather and cotton while she avoids wearing lace, brocade and fleece. There are several brands that are preferred such as Topshop, Zara, Adidas, Calvin Klein, Urban Outfitters. She reorganizes her wardrobe once a month and discards the things from the wardrobe once every six months. She organizes clothing and accessories by category, silhouette, brand, season and frequency of wearing.

Wearing Time: She wears dresses, pants, suits, jackets and outers for five years, blouses or shirts for four years, T-shirts and skirts for three years and accessories for two years. Her old and unwanted clothing items are usually donated to charity, kept in her wardrobe, or given to other family members.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Participant-5 expressed her great interest in sustainability. She strongly agreed that she believes keeping clothing items in her wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice (See Table 2).

She had never heard about the concept of a capsule wardrobe before she participated in this research. Her definition of the capsule wardrobe was “*A wardrobe that is carefully and intentionally curated to be timeless and coordinated. The pieces in the*

wardrobe should be of quality that will last and that fit cohesively into a wardrobe that produces versatile looks using the same pieces.”

(6) Participant-6

Shopping Habits: Participant-6 spends less than \$50 per month for her clothing. She purchases new clothing once a month from department stores, discount stores, fast fashion brands, local boutiques and vintage stores. Versatility is the most critical factor when she buys new clothing. She also considers the latest fashion trends. She does not place much value on sustainability and ethical issues.

Wardrobe Strategies: Participant-6 prefers to wear form-fitting silhouettes with neutral colors rather than loose and wide styles with bright colors. She likes cotton and rayon but does not like wool. Zara is her favorite brand and avoids wearing Abercrombie & Fitch. She rearranges her wardrobe every month and discards some clothing items from her wardrobe once every three months. She organizes her wardrobe by category, color and season.

Wearing Time: T-shirts, pants, jackets, outers and accessories are generally worn for six years, dresses for five years, blouses or shirts and skirts for three years, suits for two years. She prefers to donate or give clothing no longer in use to charity or family members.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Although Participant-6 agreed that she is interested in sustainability and has a clear idea of sustainability, she neither agreed or disagreed that she considers sustainability when purchasing new clothing and prefers to buy an item of clothing that is described as

‘sustainable’, ‘organic’, ‘eco-friendly’ or ‘ethical’. She disagreed that she tries not to purchase new clothing to reduce textile waste (See Table 2).

She had learned about a capsule wardrobe through social media because her friend was doing it. The capsule wardrobe was defined by her as “*A capsule wardrobe is a smaller wardrobe consisting of staple items of clothing that have lots of versatility.*”

(7) Participant-7

Shopping Habits: Participant-7 goes shopping for new clothes once a month and spends \$50-100 on average per month. She shops at all kinds of retail stores—department stores, discount stores, fast fashion brand stores, local boutiques, vintage stores, internet shopping malls. She also uses *Poshmark* which is a social marketplace for fashion where people from the United States can sell, buy and share their personal style with others. For example, users post photos of their items for sale from a virtual “closet” that others can purchase (Meltzer, 2014, July 16). The quality of fabric is the most important thing for her when she purchases new clothing. Price is also considered. Shapes, silhouettes or colors are not as important as other things for her.

Wardrobe Strategies: She only wears neutral colors, never wears pastels or bright colors. She likes wools, cottons and denim and avoids wearing something that is very tight to the body. She does not have any specific brands that she prefers or avoids wearing. Her wardrobe is rearranged once every six months. She discards clothing once a month. She arranges the wardrobe by season and frequency and from oldest to newest.

Wearing Time: She wears jackets for six years, dresses and outers for five years, blouses or shirts and pants for four years, T-shirts, skirts and suits for three years, accessories for two years. She donates, keeps or gives her clothing that are old and unwanted. She sometimes sells them on mobile application like Poshmark.

Understanding of Concepts of Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe: Participant 7 showed that she takes sustainability seriously (See Table 2). She had heard about a capsule wardrobe through an email from a professor in Retail Merchandising in the College of Design at University of Minnesota. She described the capsule wardrobe as “*A small set of interchange pieces of about 30 items. These include essentials and staple items that can be mix and matched.*”

Table 2

Results from the Survey Section Related to Sustainability

	P-1	P-2	P-3	P-4	P-5	P-6	P-7	Average
I am interested in sustainability.	7	7	6	7	7	6	6	6.6
I understand the concept of sustainability clearly.	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	6.7
When I purchase new clothing, I consider sustainability.	7	6	5	5	6	4	7	5.7
I consider myself to be environmentally conscious.	7	6	5	6	7	5	6	6.0
I prefer to purchase an item of clothing that is described as ‘sustainable’, ‘organic’, ‘eco-friendly’ or ‘ethical’.	7	4	5	6	6	4	7	5.6
I believe that keeping the items in my wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice.	7	7	3	3	7	4	6	5.3
I try not to purchase new clothing for reducing textile waste.	7	7	6	5	4	2	6	5.3

Notes. 7 = Strongly Agree / 1 = Strongly Disagree

Summary of Findings from Online Survey

According to the online survey, participants purchase new clothing item every other month on average. They spend an average of \$50-100 per month on their clothing. They shop for their clothing at various types of apparel stores such as department stores, discount stores, vintage or second-hand stores, fast fashion brand stores, local boutiques, and online stores. Since they are college students, they are not able to afford high end brands, so they usually choose price over quality. They found that compromise can satisfy both good quality and affordable price by shopping at second-hand stores.

When they purchase new clothing, they place a priority on different factors like versatility (3 of 7), price (2 of 7) and quality of fabric (2 of 7). However, only Participant-1 said that she cares most about sustainability and ethical issues when she purchases her clothing. Participants prefer to wear neutral and darker colors rather than bright colors. However, Participant-2 who likes to wear pop colors—i.e. coral or pink.

The wearing time of clothing varies based on the category of clothing. Participants keep outer/jacket (5.3 years), pants (5.1 years), dresses (4.6 years), suits (4 years), t-shirts (3.6 years), blouses or shirts (3.6 years), accessories (3.4 years), and skirts (3.3 years) in order of the longest wearing time.

Four participants—Participant-1, 3, 5, and 6—rearrange their wardrobes once a month, two participants—Participant-2 and 4—rearrange theirs once a week, and Participant-7 does it once every six months. Four participants—P-1, 3, 4, and 7—dispose of clothes that are no longer in use every month, P-6-- once every three months, P-5 does it once every six months, and P-2 rarely throws them away—she does it every several

years. However, they all prefer to keep their old or no longer worn clothes in their wardrobes rather than discarding them. If they are not able to find other ways of wearing them, they usually donate, hand them down to their family, give to their friends, or sometimes sell them through mobile resale store.

As Table 2 on page 65 shows, all participants are highly interested in sustainability (6.6/7) and they strongly agreed that they understand the concept of sustainability clearly (6.7/7). They somewhat agreed that keeping the items in my wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice (5.3/7) and they try not to purchase new clothing for reducing textile waste (5.3/7). All participants except Participant-5 heard about a capsule wardrobe through a variety of sources like magazines, blogs, documentary, social media, or people they know. They all defined the concept of a capsule wardrobe in their own words.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF DAILY JOURNALS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings and analysis of findings from daily journals to answer the first research question of this study:

Research Question 1: What patterns— i.e., in the manipulation of garments and the visual result—emerge for creating different ensembles with limited items?

Participants were asked to fill in daily journals during this capsule wardrobe project. Their daily journals include selfies of their outfits and descriptions of their outfits—whether they liked their outfits, what factors they considered the most when they were creating their ensembles. From daily journals, the ways participants selected items and the ways participants created the different combinations of ensembles with limited clothing items will be analyzed. Based on the self-portrait photos of their daily outfits and descriptions from the journals, the researcher will explore whether there are evident patterns of dressing with a capsule wardrobe.

Findings from Daily Journals

Participants created an outfit with the items in their capsule wardrobes and took a selfie of the outfit each day for seven weeks. Participants received a template for daily journals in MS Word to be filled out at the end of each day (see Appendix E). They were asked to write the assigned numbers of items worn, whether they liked their ensemble(s)

or not and why, whether they created a new outfit that they have never worn before or not, which factors they considered when they put items together and any thoughts or feelings they wanted to share were described in daily journals. Participants were able to skip the journaling if there was a valid reason, but the reason should be explained. Journals were sent to the researcher at the end of every week.

Item List

Six participants had 33 items in their original capsule wardrobes in total—before reorganization. Participant-4 had 28 items in her wardrobe intentionally. On the average, participants had 16 tops, 5 bottoms, 4 outers, 1 dress, 4 shoes and 2 bags. Black was the dominant color of all participants' wardrobes—12 items in each of their wardrobes were black on average (See Table 3).

Table 3

Number of Clothing Item in Original Capsule Wardrobe Classified by Category

	Total	Tops	Bottoms	Dresses	Outers	Shoes	Bags
P-1	33	16(48%)	5(15%)	2(6%)	4(12%)	4(12%)	2(6%)
P-2	33	17(52%)	5(15%)	3(9%)	2(6%)	4(12%)	2(6%)
P-3	33	19(58%)	5(15%)	3(9%)	1(3%)	4(12%)	1(3%)
P-4	28	16(57%)	2(7%)	0(0%)	4(14%)	4(14%)	2(7%)
P-5	33	18(55%)	8(24%)	0(0%)	3(9%)	3(9%)	1(3%)
P-6	33	13(39%)	5(15%)	1(3%)	8(15%)	5(12%)	1(3%)
P-7	33	12(36%)	8(24%)	1(3%)	5(15%)	4(12%)	3(9%)
Average	32	16(49%)	5(17%)	1(4%)	4(12%)	4(12%)	2(5%)

Wardrobe Creation

In the first week, participants completed the first questionnaire to share their experience of creating a capsule wardrobe (see APPENDIX D). Below are the questions that were included in the first questionnaire.

(1) How much time did you spend on creating your capsule wardrobe?

Participant-3 spent the longest time creating her capsule wardrobe—which was four hours. Participant-1 spent 3 hours, Participant-7 spent 2 hours, and Participant-2, 4 and 5 spent a half hour. Participant-6 spent only 20 minutes.

(2) Which item did you pick up first and why?

Six participants—Participants-1 to 6—picked their favorite clothing items that they knew they were going to wear often. These items were usually basic and essential items such as denim jeans—two participants, P-5 and P-6, selected their denim jeans first. In contrast, Participant-7 challenged herself to pick one of her items that she had never worn before. Interestingly, Participant-7 got the highest score in the first creativity test (See Table 4 on the following page).

Table 4

Items Participants Selected for Their Capsule Wardrobe First and Reasons

	Item	Reason
P-1	Black culottes	<i>"I wear them regularly. They are super comfortable and I can wear them on a variety of occasions."</i>
P-2	Pants	<i>"They are the most essential to me and are usually what I create my outfit around. I pick out pants based on the activities I'm doing that day so it was essential that I pick out the most versatile pants I own."</i>
P-3	Grey sweater cardigan	<i>"I throw it over everything and use it as my go-to sweater. I love it."</i>
P-4	Green turtleneck sweater	<i>"It is one of my favorite pieces and I wear it almost every day."</i>
P-5	Denim jeans	<i>"I consider my denim jeans to be a staple and one of the most basic items in my day-to-day wardrobe. By laying out the jeans I chose for my capsule wardrobe I was able to easily visually and create outfits on top of those basic pieces. It was easier to add a top and/or jacket based on the look of the jean I had initially picked."</i>
P-6	Denim jeans	<i>"It is one of my favorite pieces of clothing and I know that I wear it a lot."</i>
P-7	Black long-sleeved shirt with fringe	<i>"I have never worn it but always wanted to."</i>

(3) What were your strategies of selecting items?

All seven participants indicated that 'versatility' was the key strategy of selecting items for their capsule wardrobes. They carefully considered whether the items they picked up would go well with each other so that they can be layered to create different ensembles. Also, they tried to select pieces that are comfortable and frequently wearing.

(4) What factors—i.e. silhouette, color, material, brand, etc.—do you consider while creating your capsule wardrobe?

Six participants, except Participant-3, answered that color was the biggest factor they considered while creating the capsule wardrobe. They chose neutral colors since that would be easily mixed and matched. Besides color, participants also considered fabric material (P-2, P-4, P-5 and P-7), silhouette (P-3, P-5 and P-7), and brands (P-3, P-5, P-7). Only Participant-1 mentioned personal attachment when selecting the items (See Table 5 on the following page).

Table 5

Factors that Participants Considered While Creating Their Capsule Wardrobes

	Factors	Description
P-1	Color	<i>"Color was the biggest factor I considered. The items in my collection are largely black and neutral."</i>
	Personal attachment	<i>"I chose a lot of pieces that I have a special meaning for me."</i>
P-2	Color	<i>"I considered color probably the most. I chose items that are mostly neutral—black, brown, some blues, and stripes. I know that I can mix all these pieces with any of the other items I chose."</i>
	Fabric Material	<i>"Woven materials versus knits. I do have some knits, they are definitely more relaxed. I have more woven fabrics because I think they look more polished and professional and will likely make me feel more put together when I am feeling uninspired as the weeks go on."</i>
P-3	Silhouette	<i>"I usually do not mind the material. I stick to oversized clothes or clothes I can layer."</i>
	Brand	<i>"A lot of my clothes are from a boutique that I visited in Sweden this summer."</i>
P-4	Fabric Material	<i>"I considered a fabric because I wanted to pick things warm enough."</i>
	Color	<i>"Another factor I really considered was color because I wanted neutrals that would easily mix and match with each other."</i>
P-5	Color	<i>"I typically wear neutral colors so I wanted to make sure the items I picked for my wardrobe could easily be paired with other garments and not be restricted due to the color of the item. I chose mostly white, black, grey, and light blue blouses as to be easily paired with denim and other pants."</i>
	Pattern	<i>"Pieces that had minimal patterns and prints so that any busy prints would not distract from other garments."</i>
	Fabric Material	<i>"Cotton tops (t-shirts and blouses) that could be layered with other items and could be tucked-in and comfortable to wear and be layered."</i>
	Brand	<i>"I wanted to include brands in my capsule wardrobe that would be of a higher quality of a textile fabric and would theoretically last longer in terms of garment care."</i>
	Silhouette	<i>"I also wanted to incorporate different silhouettes that could be loose fitting (comfortable) and easily layered on top on one another."</i>
P-6	Color	<i>"(Color) allows different pieces to be worn together more"</i>
P-7	Silhouette	<i>"I chose a lot of looser fitting silhouettes so I can layer."</i>
	Color	<i>"I chose all neutral colors."</i>
	Fabric Material	<i>"Natural materials."</i>
	Brand	<i>"I have a wide variety of brands. Some are fast fashion and some are vintage."</i>

Wardrobe Rearrangement

In week 5, participants were offered the opportunity to reorganize their capsule wardrobes. For the second questionnaire, participants answered the following questions after the wardrobe rearrangement (APPNEDIX F).

(1) Did you rearrange your capsule wardrobe? Why or why not?

Except Participant-1, all other participants rearranged their capsule wardrobe. Participant-1 described the reason she had not rearranged her wardrobe: she felt she had not worn a lot of her items yet so she wanted to use the last couple weeks to wear more of her wardrobe.

There are several reasons why other participants rearranged their wardrobes. Four participants—P-2, P-3, P5 and P-7—out of six mentioned a change in weather:

- P-2: *“Yes, I decided to rearrange some things in my capsule wardrobe. I needed to wear a warmer coat so that was an easy decision.”*
- P-3: *“...I also need to switch some items since the weather is getting colder, like my shoes with an open back or not having winter jackets.”*
- P-5: *“I did rearrange my capsule wardrobe in order to take out some of the items I have not worn due to weather appropriateness and other seasonal factors. I wanted to include some warmer garments and items that would help diversify my entire wardrobe overall.”*
- P-7: *“...I also added new items due to the change in weather temperatures.”*

Participant-4 and Participant-7 wanted to add some items that could be layered and versatile:

- P-4: *“I did not feel like I had enough layerable pieces and wanted to include some more basics.”*

- P-7: *“Yes, I did. I added new versatile things that I knew would fit in well with my capsule wardrobe.”*

Another reason was that participants noticed that there were certain items they had not worn often:

- P-2: *“...I also decided to switch out my red sneakers for a pair of heeled booties. I barely wore the red sneakers and found myself wanting to wear heels every weekend or if I went out to dinner during the week.”*
- P-3: *“I did rearrange my wardrobe because I noticed there are items I was not wearing often or more than once, and I was thinking of other styles I wish I would have added into my wardrobe.”*

Only P-6 mentioned boredom of her items:

- P-6: *“I rearranged my capsule wardrobe because I was getting tired of wearing the same outfits.”*

(2) How much time did you spend on rearranging your capsule wardrobe?

Participants did not spend a lot of time rearranging their capsule wardrobes. They were able to do that because they already had in mind the items that they wanted to change. The longest time was an hour (P-3) and the shortest time was 10 minutes (P-5).

(3) What were your strategies for rearranging the wardrobe?

In order to rearrange their capsule wardrobe, participants had thought about which items they were effectively wearing. They removed the items they were not wearing and replaced them with new pieces that could be worn more. Participants also mentioned that they tried to add more versatile pieces.

(4) What factors—i.e. silhouette, color, material, brand, etc.—did you consider while rearranging your capsule wardrobe?

Participants considered color, silhouette and fabric material. The capsule wardrobe project began in October and participants rearranged the wardrobes in November. Since the weather in Minnesota changed dramatically, weather was the most important factor for most participants:

- P-3: *“I considered the weather the most. I wanted to make sure that I would be warm no matter what I wear.”*
- P-4: *“Weather and versatility were the two most important factors that helped me picked which items I would be replacing in my capsule wardrobe. I definitely needed a warmer winter jacket to be added.”*
- P-7: *“I considered color and material the most, color following my neutral color palette and materials that were thick and of high quality to keep me warm.”*

Participant-2 mentioned occasion at this time:

- P-2: *“Material and occasion were the most important. I added the skirt and the blouse because I know I could wear both to work.”*

Analysis of Findings from Daily Journals

To answer the first research question of this study, journals and in-depth interviews were analyzed:

Research Question 1: What patterns, i.e., in the manipulation of garments and the visual result, emerge for creating different ensembles with limited items?

Participants had to find the ways to create different ensembles with limited items. In this process of solving a simple daily problem, participants developed their strategies for creating and wearing their outfits. Solutions included the following:

Layering

Combining different clothing items in layers can be a way of creating a variety of outfits. Layering was the key strategy that participants used to make their outfits look different every day with limited items. Participants experimented with layering things in the ways that they had never tried before. Through layering, participants put together outfits that they considered to be creative and individual. This modified their daily dressing routines.

Layering not only allows wearers to create different looks and mix colors and patterns in a variety of ways but also provides more warmth to wearers in cold climates. Usually wearing more than two light and thin layers can be warmer than wearing one thick layer, since the layers function as thermal insulation with the air trapped between each layer. Therefore, the skill of layered clothing is relevant in Minnesota's fall and winter seasons. This pattern of dressing might be more difficult with a summer capsule wardrobe.

Participant-2, Participant-4 and Participant-5 layered things in various ways.

P-2 had most variety of colors and patterns in her capsule wardrobe so it should be a greater challenge to layer than other participants. However, she was not afraid to layer items by mixing and matching various patterns and colors. This kind of dressing

strategy made her outfits look bold and unique. Figure 11 shows how different ways of layering made her ensembles look different. She used a simple beige shirt (Item # 11 in her capsule wardrobe) in various ways:



Figure 11. Participant-2's Different Ways of Layering Beige Shirt (Item #11)

Participant-4 said in her second in-depth interview that she enjoyed experimenting with layering clothing items in her capsule wardrobe. As the project went on, she tried unconventional ways of layering that she had never even thought about before. She said,

“Towards the end, now I am starting to layer in different ways that what I ever would have even thought about before. Before this project, I would have never ever layered a sweater under this turtle neck (she was wearing them in her second interview). I would have never done this. And I have also layered turtle necks under other crew necks. I thought that turtle necks are not made to go under sweaters; they are made to be pieces that are covered up or you wear by themselves. But now I have got into layering them with others.”

Figure 12 shows the examples of various layered looks that Participant-4 created:



“I like the way the denim shirt looks layered under this sweater.”



“I like the way this sweater looks layered. A lot of people at my work have this sweater, but I have never seen anyone layer it! I like the way it looks and will be wearing it layered again!”



“It’s a unique way of layering (two turtlenecks) and I would not have thought of it before seeing it in an ad. I saw this turtleneck layered under this sweater on the Madewell website and wanted to try it out! I am glad it looked good!”



“I like the way the sweater lays over the turtleneck and how the colors go together! I really like layering with the turtleneck. It was not something I thought of before this project, but it is growing on me.”

Figure 12. Layered Looks Participant-4 Created and Her Thoughts on Her Outfits

Participant-5 created her perfect layered outfit of the day by trial and error. She was never afraid of changing her outfits several times a day if she was not satisfied with what she tried first. To improve her outfit, she layered items in different ways as shown in Figure 13. She described why she was not satisfied with her first combination and how she ended up with creating desired outfit by changing the ways of layering items:

“I did not like this first outfit because I do not feel that it fit my style aesthetic. I choose to layer a black long sleeve shirt with a simple white t-shirt for the sake of layering and staying warm. I do not think this combination worked because of the scoop neck cut of the t-shirt. I think changing into outfits 2 and 3 felt a lot better about my styling. I was able to layer these outfits while still maintaining my sense of style. Besides the aesthetic reason, warmth and layering were the main considerations. When I decided that I did not like the first outfit I had put together, I decided to change into my blue tapered “mom” jeans because they were the thickest pair of denim in my capsule wardrobe and would provide some additional warmth.”



Figure 13. Different Combinations of Clothing that Participant-5 Tried on December 7, 2017

Participants who were successful in layering limited items in their capsule wardrobes creatively were more satisfied and got more confident with creating their outfits. They felt a sense of accomplishment since it gave them an experience of solving a problem every day.

Versatility

Since the capsule wardrobes can include a limited number of clothing items, participants preferred versatile items that can be worn with various items in different ways. Therefore, neutral colors—black, grey and white—were dominant in their capsule wardrobes. As described previously in this chapter, when participants were creating their initial capsule wardrobes, color was the most important factor. On average, 27% of the items in their capsule wardrobes were black.

As Table 3 (on page 69) showed, participants' capsule wardrobes included separate items more than dresses because separate tops and bottoms are easier to be mixed and matched with other items than one-piece dresses. In the second interview, participants were asked to select the best and worst item from their capsule wardrobes (See Table 6). The best items that they selected were basic and versatile pieces, such as black and grey turtlenecks, blue denim shirt, off-white cardigan, black pants, and black sneakers, that can be layered in various ways. On the other hand, the worst items selected were the items that they considered to be not versatile or weather-appropriate.

Table 6

Best and Worst Items Selected from Participants' Capsule Wardrobes

	Best Item	Worst Item
P-1	[Black Turtleneck]	[Light Pink T-shirt]
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Versatile - Good to be layered 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too bright color - Too thin for cold weather - Did not even wear it
P-2	[Black Turtleneck]	[Black Long Dress]
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Versatile - Good to be layered 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not versatile - Difficult to be layered
P-3	[Black Canvas Sneakers]	[Grey Short Sleeve Dress]
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Versatile - Can be worn with various styles 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not versatile - Too short to wear by itself - Difficult to be layered

P-4**[Denim Shirt]**

- Versatile
- Good to be layered

[Khaki Sweater]

- Worn only once
 - Difficult to be layered
-

P-5**[Off-white Cardigan]**

- Versatile
- Good to be layered

[Khaki Pants]

- Not appropriate to weather
 - Not versatile
-

P-6**[Black Pants]**

- Versatile
- Good to be layered

[Beige Pants]

- Never worn
 - Not versatile
 - Difficult to be layered
-

P-7**[Grey Turtleneck]**

- Versatile
- Good to be layered
- Warm

[Blush Pink Booties]

- Worn only once
 - Not versatile
(can only be dressed up)
-

Adding accessories, wearing makeup, and changing hairstyle

As explained in Chapter 3, accessories and jewelry such as scarves, belts, hats, earrings, or necklaces were not included in their capsule wardrobes. Participants endeavored to make their looks more diverse by adding accessories, wearing makeup or changing their hairstyles.

Participant-6 said that she had to attend some special events during the project, and it was difficult to dress up with the limited items in her capsule wardrobe. Hence, she emphasized her makeup and hair to create styles that were more unique and presentable:

“I think all my stuff that I had in my wardrobe cannot make me to be dressed up, so I would either pair with a nicer shoe or do my hair nicer and makeup nicer to make it look more formal or put-together.”

Participant-2 mentioned that she tried expressing her mood and creativity in her dress as well as makeup and hair:

“I think that honestly depends on my mood. I know that when I am feeling sad or stressed out, I like to put more efforts into what I am wearing or put on something that is a bit more creative because that helps elevate my mood. I feel like that is the opposite of what I hear other people do. On those days, I ask myself, 'Oh, Ok. What are things that I can do that make me feel better?' Answer is 'getting dressed!' Because I love clothes and I hope that maybe I can mimic the mood that my clothes are putting forward... Something that makes me feel a little bit more dressed up... So I put on a dress and some nicer shoes. I also put a little bit more effort into my makeup, and hopefully it is a good hair day!”

Participant-4 argued that she learned how accessories and hairstyle can make a big difference in how she appears through her experience of the capsule wardrobe. She said that she purchased some hair accessories during this project, but no clothes. She purchased them to add more variety to her outfits:

“Accessories can make a big difference, I think. I did not really think about that very much before. When I was in high school, I would wear statement necklaces and stuff but not so much anymore. But after doing this, I realized that just pairing these earrings and putting my hair up or wearing my hair down then not putting earrings on, it makes a real difference; it makes an outfit look completely different.”

Participant-5 liked to add different styles and colors of scarves and hats and constantly changed her hairstyles to make her total look more individual and diverse (See Figure 14).



Figure 14. Ways Participant-5 Added Accessories and Changed Hairstyles

Participant-7 had the most neutral and monotonous capsule wardrobe. Her initial wardrobe included 19 items that are black, and her final wardrobe included 23 black

items. The way she added fun and style to her outfits was with hats. She often wore hats to complete her look and sometimes changed her hair in different ways (See Figure 15).



Figure 15. Ways Participant-7 Wore Various Hats and Changed Hairstyles

Physical and emotional comfort

Although aesthetic pleasure is an important factor to give satisfaction about their outfits to these wearers, comfort—including both physical and emotional—plays an important role to strengthen bonds between items and wearers.

There were clothing items that have significant meaning and personal attachment in the capsule wardrobes of the participants. In the first interview, participants shared their personal stories and memories of certain items that they had added in their initial capsule wardrobes. Participants usually felt special with the items that they found from second-hand stores or purchased while traveling or received from someone as a gift.

The capsule wardrobe of Participant-1 included several items that she had been wearing since high school. She gave meaning to the items that she got from second-hand or vintage stores since she is the person who cares about sustainability the most. She also pointed out that she got the grey dress in her wardrobe when she was traveling in Italy. She said that she feels more special about two items—stripped T-shirt and black turtleneck—that she got from her mother than other items (See Figure 16).



Figure 16. Items that P-1 Received from Her Mother

The other half of the items in Participant-2's capsule wardrobe was purchased from thrift or consignment stores or given by someone—13 items were second-hand and 3 were handed-down—and she was really proud of them:

“Oh, it (things that I purchased from thrifts or consignment stores) is almost half! That is crazy! For my entire wardrobe, that is probably how it is. I love hand-me-downs too. I have a pair of black jeans—mom style jeans—that was given to me by my old co-worker. It feels like a sort of magic that I would like to wear them so often and that they work so well with my wardrobe. I feel like they are current and modern, and I love that. It is cool.”

Participant-2's wardrobe also included some items that she made, or she mended by herself. For example, she made her blue and pink striped t-shirt in her studio class. It was the sample, but she liked it better than the final garment. She also cropped the hems of dark navy wide pants that she purchased from a consignment store. She gave special meaning to these items and felt a great attachment to them:

“This striped t-shirt, I actually made it. I made it in my studio last year. We had to learn how to sew knit and this is actually the sample that I made. It is not the final one. The final one is too cropped, so I should wear that with the high-waist pants. Anyway, I made this, and I am really proud of it. The colors are really bright, and I really like that cut and how it fits me. It feels really cool that I made it. I made other things in that project too but I do not wear them because they do not work with my wardrobe.” (Figure 17 left)

“These pants used to be full length—really long. They were too long so I needed to wear high heels to wear these pants but I do not wear a lot of heels. I just did not like the way they looked with other items so I finally cropped them. It was about the same time when I started seeing the same style of wide leg pants on a lot of blogs or magazines. This kind of wide leg pants started coming out after I cropped, and I felt like ‘oh! I’m on top of it!’” (Figure 17 right)



Figure 17. Items that P-2 made or mended

Participant-3 was excited to share her story of finding the grey felt tote bag and the dark grey feather vest:

“That is my go-to bag and it is actually from Target. My friend had it last year and I asked her where she got it. She told me that she got it from Target in the dollar section area. I thought that it was really cute, so I went and bought it right after she said that. It was just 5 bucks! It is felt with the leather straps! It works perfectly. I normally do not pair grey and brown together and do not wear a lot of warm neutrals. I wear a lot of cool. And this bag allows me to put both together. It is a huge tote bag so I throw so much stuff in it.” (Figure 18 left)

“The vest, I actually got from the clothing swap. There is a bunch of people that are photographers and designers in Minneapolis area and one person, particularly, started this kind of closet event. There are a lot of those people that have access to really nice clothing would bring it into this big warehouse in St. Paul and sell for super cheap. That was where I got this vest. It was only \$3 of the sale! I always wear it. I had a brown vest already but, like I said, I do not wear a lot of tans so then I found this, and I really love this because it really goes with everything that I have (in my wardrobe).” (Figure 18 right)”



Figure 18. Items of P-3

Participant-4 shared how she got some of her items with great prices from second-hand stores such as Goodwill, Salvation Army, and Buffalo Exchange. She got the blue cowl neck sweater from Goodwill for \$5 and her sister found the black leather loafers by Madewell for \$5 that she bought for her:

“My sister found those loafers for me. They were from Madewell. And normally, they are \$160, I guess, in stores. She found them at Salvation Army for \$5 and they were brand new! I was very excited because I had been wanting loafers for so long, but all the cheap loafers gave me blisters so I was really frustrated. I do not have \$160 to spend for a pair of loafers but all the cheap ones hurt my feet so bad. And she found this for \$5 and they are amazing! I wear them all the time now!” (Figure 19 left)

On the other hand, she mentioned that the most expensive item in her wardrobe was the red sweater with wide cuffs. She said that she spent \$50 and it is the piece of clothing that she spent the most money on ever in her life. She does not spend more than \$10 on anything usually. She got the same style green color sweater since she really liked the style and comfort (Figure 19 right).



Figure 19. Items of P-4

Participant-5 mentioned an oversized denim jacket (Figure 21 left). This item was the only vintage item in her capsule wardrobe. She was in school in Chicago at the

time, so it reminds her of the days she was in Chicago. She got her pale pink tote bag from a leather shop in Rome, Italy (Figure 20 right). She said that she met the designer who made the bag and he was a real artisan. She purchased several items from Italy, and she was satisfied with all of them. She picked up the jeans from Topshop as the most favorite items in her wardrobe. She said that she could wear them every day because they are very comfortable and the right fit for her.



Figure 20. Items of P-5

Participant-6 was a cape lover. Her capsule wardrobe included 6 capes with different colors and patterns from different brands (See Figure 21 on the next page). She said that the reason why she loves wearing a cape is that it is easy, warm, free-flowing, comfortable and cute. She emphasized that the comfort plays a really big role.



Figure 21. Various Capes of P-6

In her capsule wardrobe, participant-7 had 9 pieces of clothing that are second-hand or handed-down.

She said that she wore a black oversized bomber jacket almost every day when she went abroad to Copenhagen, Denmark (Figure 22 left). It was a lot colder than she thought it would be, but she did not bring any other jackets. Therefore, this bomber jacket was her essential piece of clothing while she was there, and it brings up great memories of Copenhagen. There are pieces from her mom's closet. The black floral embroidered blouse was from her mom that was worn in 1980s (Figure 22 right). She also has a lot of turtlenecks from her mother, but she said that she did not include them in her capsule wardrobe.



Figure 22. Items of P-7

People keep and wear certain clothing items because of a strong personal attachment to those items. Participant-1 said, *“Pieces of emotional significance are the most important. When your clothing has special meaning, it becomes easier to wear without tiring of it.”* Besides aesthetic values and pleasure, unforgettable personal stories and memories are significant to have an attachment with clothing items.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 5 described the findings and analysis of findings from daily journals and answered the first research question of this study: *What patterns, i.e., in the manipulation of garments and the visual result, emerge for creating different ensembles with limited items?*

The shopping habits and wardrobe strategies influenced the item selection for their capsule wardrobes. The capsule wardrobes of participants included clothing items they got from various brands but mostly from fast fashion brands or second-hand stores. Their wardrobes were mostly neutral. Black was the dominant color—an average of 36% of the items in their capsules.

Through analyzing the visual data—self-taken photographs of participants' daily outfits—of daily journals, the following patterns emerged for creating different ensembles with limited items of the capsule wardrobe: (1) layering; (2) versatility; (3) adding accessories, wearing makeup, and changing hairstyle; and (4) physical and emotional comfort.

Participants found different ways of layering to create a variety of outfits. Some participants enjoyed layering more pieces than others and they were not afraid of mixing various colors and patterns. This dressing strategy helped participants' outfits to be creative and individual yet provided warmth in winter in Minnesota.

Participants reported that versatility was a key feature of clothing items in a capsule wardrobe. Since there was a restriction on numbers of items, versatile items that can be worn in various ways were preferred rather than unique ones. That was why participants included a lot of essential items like a black turtleneck, denim shirt, and black pants.

By adding accessories, wearing jewelry, wearing makeup and changing hairstyle, participants were trying to bring diversity to their appearances without affecting their limited wardrobes. These items made their looks more diverse and individual.

Besides aesthetic pleasure, physical and emotional comfort were critical when participants selected items for their outfits. Certain items of clothing in their wardrobes had significant meaning and unforgettable memories and participants felt more attached to those items and felt more comfortable when they wore them.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF CREATIVITY TESTS, DAILY JOURNALS, AND PRE-INTERVIEW

Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 2, several previous researchers have argued that one's creativity can be enhanced by certain types of daily practices including dressing. This concept of creativity is considered as 'little-c' creativity proposed by Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) that focuses on everyday creativity of ordinary people like the participants of this study. Generativity Theory advanced by Robert Epstein (Epstein, Kaminaka, Phan, & Uda, 2013) suggested that people can develop their creativity by solving various large and small problems every day. Csikszentmihalyi (2013) argued that people could cultivate flow in their daily lives through such experiences as shopping for a special item or trying on a new dress.

This study examined whether the experience of engaging in a capsule wardrobe project influenced participants' creativity. The project challenged the participants to solve the problem of creating new outfits with a limited number of clothing items. This is the second research question of this study:

Research Question 2: How does the daily practice of dressing with a capsule wardrobe affect one's creativity?

To answer this research question, two creativity tests, daily journals, and a pre-interview were conducted. To measure the changes in the level of participants' creativity,

they were asked to take the creativity test—Epstein Creativity Competencies Inventory for Individuals (or ECCI-i) developed by Robert Epstein—before starting and after the project ended. They gave their answers on a 5-point Likert-type scale labeled agree (5) and disagree (1) at the extremes. The scores of the first and second creativity test were compared for any changes. The results of the creativity tests will serve as a baseline for cross checking the participants' experiences as observed and reported in their pre-interview and daily journals.

Analysis of the data from daily journals included how many clothing items—layers—were used to create outfits and how many different outfits were created during the period of the project. Additionally, exploring attitudes of participants toward the experience of the capsule wardrobe will determine any association between the change in their creativity and their overall attitudes.

The pre-interview was completed at the beginning of the project—right after participants created their initial capsule wardrobes. In this pre-interview, three questions were related to creativity. Participants were asked to evaluate their creativity and to explain how they express their creativity. The self-evaluated creativity scores of participants will be compared with the average scores of their creativity tests.

Findings from Creativity Tests

Seven volunteer participants were asked to take the Epstein Creativity Competencies Inventory for Individuals (or ECCI-i) before starting and after the project ended. There are four different areas of skills that the ECCI-i measures: (1) Preserves

New Ideas, (2) Seeks Challenges, (3) Broadens Skills and Knowledge and (4) Changes Physical and Social Environment. Participants took an unabridged online version of ECCI-i. There are 28 questions evenly divided to measure each of the four areas that help people express their creativity (Epstein, Schmidt & Warfel, 2008). Participants gave their answers on a 5-point Likert-type scale labeled agree (5) and disagree (1) at the extremes. They were informed that there were no right or wrong answers.

Test Scores

The scores that participants got from taking the first and the second creativity test were analyzed. From the first to the second creativity test, four participants—Participant-1, Participant-4, Participant-5, Participant-7—received higher scores (7-points higher on average) in their second creativity tests; one participant—Participant-2—stayed the same; two participants—Participant-3, Participant-6—received lower scores (10.5-points lower on average). The average score of ‘Preserves New Ideas’ and ‘Changes Physical and Social Environment’ decreased 0.1 and 1.3 points for each while the average score of ‘Seeks Challenges’ and ‘Broadens Skills and Knowledge’ increased 0.7 and 1.1 points for each. (See Table 7 and 8)

Table 7

Results from the ECCI-I Creativity Tests

	Item	Test 1	Test 2	Difference
P-1	Total Score	67	79	12
	Preserves New Ideas	79	83	4
	Seeks Challenges	54	58	4
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	79	79	0
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	54	67	13
P-2	Total Score	70	70	0
	Preserves New Ideas	63	75	12
	Seeks Challenges	58	50	-8
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	71	79	8
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	88	75	-13
P-3	Total Score	65	52	-13
	Preserves New Ideas	67	58	-9
	Seeks Challenges	29	29	0
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	88	63	-25
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	75	58	-17
P-4	Total Score	63	67	4
	Preserves New Ideas	54	54	0
	Seeks Challenges	50	58	8
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	67	83	16
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	79	71	-8
P-5	Total Score	59	70	11
	Preserves New Ideas	54	58	4
	Seeks Challenges	50	42	-8
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	67	92	25
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	67	88	21
P-6	Total Score	66	58	-8
	Preserves New Ideas	67	67	0
	Seeks Challenges	46	46	0
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	83	63	-20
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	67	58	-9
P-7	Total Score	71	72	1
	Preserves New Ideas	75	63	-12
	Seeks Challenges	58	67	9
	Broadens Skills and Knowledge	75	79	4
	Changes Physical and Social Environment	75	79	4

Table 8

Summary of the Average Scores of the first and second ECCI-i test

	Test 1	Test 2	Difference
Total Score	65.9	66.9	1.0
Preserves New Ideas	65.6	65.4	-0.1
Seeks Challenges	49.3	50.0	0.7
Broadens Skills and Knowledge	75.7	76.9	1.1
Changes Physical and Social Environment	72.1	70.9	-1.3

Findings from Daily Journals

Wardrobe Creation and Satisfaction

Participants created their capsule wardrobes in the first week of this project and they rearranged some of their items—maximum 5—in the 5th week of the 8-week project. Right after they created their initial capsule wardrobes and right after they updated their wardrobes, they were asked to respond whether they were satisfied with their wardrobes.

(1) Are you satisfied with your initial capsule wardrobe?

Five participants—P-1, P-2, P-4, P-5 and P-7, agreed that they are satisfied with their capsule wardrobes and items they had selected for their wardrobe. On the other hand, Participant-3 and Participant-6 were not fully satisfied with their capsule wardrobes. They explained that they wished they had other items or more variety in their wardrobes:

- P-3: *“Yes and No. I am satisfied with a majority of my items, but I am not sure if I will wear all of them because I do not love them. I like my dark jeans but would prefer a plain black with no holes, I just did not have time to buy them.”*
- P-6: *“Mostly, but I wish I had more variety.”*

Interestingly, these two participants got the lower scores in the second creativity tests.

(2) Are you satisfied with your updated capsule wardrobe? Why?

Participant-3 was the one who was not fully satisfied with her original capsule wardrobe. When she had a chance to rearrange her capsule wardrobe, she switched 5 items. However, she said that she was not satisfied with her updated wardrobe either. She wished she could switch more items. She was the one that who had the biggest drop in the second creativity test. She got 13 points lower score in her second creativity test:

- P-3: *“I am not fully satisfied because I wish I could swap out more items. It is difficult that jackets are included in the 33 items because I consider them a necessity, like underwear or pajamas.”*

Except for her, all other participants were satisfied with their revised capsule wardrobes.

Attitudes Toward the Project at Mid-term in the Project

After participants completed their wardrobe rearrangement, they were asked to share their ideas and feelings about the project so far. Most participants (5 of 7) presented a positive attitude and excitement toward the project. However, Participant-3 and Participant-6 expressed that they were struggling with the challenge. Again, the scores of these two participants in the creativity test decreased from the first to the second (See Table 9 on the next page).

Table 9

Attitudes of the Participants in the 5th Week
and the Results in the Creativity Tests

	Idea	Wardrobe Rearrange- -ment	Attitude	Result of Creativity Test
P-1	<i>"I wish I had more of a chance to mix and match my items in a more exciting way."</i>	No	Positive	Increased
P-2	<i>"I am still feeling motivated. I am enjoying the process so far. It is fun to get dressed, it obviously takes less time to pick out clothes. But some mornings I feel like I have nothing to wear and some mornings I feel like I have endless possibilities—which is funny because I feel the same way when I have more clothes in my closet. I also notice it is much easier to keep my closet clean with fewer items and that makes me happy."</i>	Yes	Positive	Stayed the same
P-3	<i>"This project is difficult in some ways and easier in others. I find myself wearing some items almost every other day, versus others I barely have worn once. I wish there was more swapping so that I could continuously refine my wardrobe and have it been near perfect by the end of the study."</i>	Yes	Negative	Decreased
P-4	<i>"I'm excited to start the second half and have been enjoying putting together my outfits every day and telling people about the project."</i>	Yes	Positive	Increased
P-5	<i>"I am feeling good about the project so far and am enjoying creating these journals. Other than a little bit of time management issues and formatting issues that have caused me to turn some of the journals in late I haven't run into any other issues. I definitely have been looking back into my previous week's journals to reference outfits that I liked and to help influence the current outfits I am putting together to wear."</i>	Yes	Positive	Increased
P-6	<i>"It is getting more difficult to put together outfits that I have not worn before. I also am slightly getting tired of taking pictures of my wardrobe and documenting them."</i>	Yes	Negative	Decreased
P-7	<i>"I can't believe I have been able to easily wear clothes from my capsule every day."</i>	Yes	Positive	Increased

Daily Outfits

For seven weeks, except the first week when they spent time creating their capsule wardrobes, participants were asked to create daily outfits with limited items in their capsule wardrobes every day. They were also asked to take selfies of their daily outfits and document the items used in their outfits. The average number of combinations of outfits that the participants created for seven weeks was 40 and the average number of items used in the outfits was 4.5. Participant-4 created 55 different ensembles of clothing which was the highest number of outfits created among the seven participants. The least number of outfits created was 30 which Participant-6 created. Participant-2 used an average of six different items when she created her ensembles whereas Participant-3 only used an average of three items in her outfits (See Table 10).

Table 10

Number of Combinations of Outfits and the Average Number of Items Used

	The number of combinations of outfits	The average number of items used in the outfits
P-1	33	5 (4.9)
P-2	44	6 (5.7)
P-3	38	3 (3.4)
P-4	55	5 (5.4)
P-5	37	4 (3.8)
P-6	30	4 (3.8)
P-7	40	4 (4.3)
Average	40 (rounded off)	5 (4.5)

Findings from Pre-In-depth Interviews

Self-assessment of Creativity

Three questions—Q 4, 5 and 6—in the first in-depth interview were related to creativity. Participants were asked to assess their creativity by themselves and describe how they express their creativity.

(1) ‘Q 4. Do you consider yourself as a creative person? Why or why not?’

Every participant answered that she considers herself as a creative person. There were various reasons given for why they consider themselves creative. Five out of seven participants remarked that their majors (and environments) require them to be creative:

- P-1: *“My major requires me to be creative a lot... too much sometimes. (laugh)”*
- P-3: *“Being in a design school and even before that I was a music student. And I make art in general. I also like design thinking process so I do a lot of creativity through design.”*
- P-4: *“I consider myself creative because I feel like I have always been involved in design. My mom was a costume designer and now she is a jewelry designer, so I have always been really immersed in that world. I have been sitting in the costume shop since I was 2 years old. It has always been something that was around me. And I tend to think that it influenced how creative I am.”*
- P-5: *“I am really interested in retail because I love fashion and visual merchandising. And visual things are really appealing to me so I hope that I could be as creative as things that I like.”*
- P-7: *“Mostly because I am in the retail program here and I kind of lay more towards the design side of it.”*

Another reason they considered themselves creative was because they usually solve problems in creative ways:

- P-1: *“I definitely love to draw, paint... I like journaling and finding interesting ways to solve problems.”*
- P-2: *“I kind of consider myself as someone who is non-traditional when I am trying to solve immediate problems—like problems that I experience around the house, for example, something is broken. I want necessarily to go and try to replace it right away. I do not have a lot of money, so that forces me to come up with solutions that are easy and inexpensive. That is not always the most perfect solution but I feel like that is something that I have done for a while. So that is how I see myself as creative.”*
- P-7: *“I had an internship that I am still working at right now, kind of thrift store, and basically what I do is creating visual displays in the store like rearranging the furniture. I can do a bottom-up display, decorate and build it—it is really fun!”*

Participants also indicated that a different way of thinking is another reason:

- P-2: *“I create a lot of collages and pieces of artwork in my free time and just taking ideas in my head and putting them in a new format.”*
- P-4: *“I am not someone who can come up with a new design, but I feel like I am creative in a sense where I am good at putting things together in a way that people would not always expect.”*
- P-6: *“I think I have a different way of thinking about things than other people do sometimes. I am always trying to think of new ideas and new ways to do things, so that is how I am creative.”*

(2) ‘Q 5. How do you express your creativity in your daily life?’

Six participants said that they express their creativity through their outfits even though the question did not directly ask whether they express their creativity through their clothing:

- P-2: *“Definitely in my dress!”*
- P-3: *“I would probably say I normally take outfits that I have worn before and try something different with them. Like wearing a shirt rolled up instead of*

having it down. So, I guess... my day-to-day thing is finding something different to do with my outfit."

- P-4: *"I think I do express (my creativity) a little bit in my clothes in a sense where I am not just wearing sweats and a sweatshirt every day like a lot of people do. You do not really see as much in a design school but when you are at the East Bank campus, you see a lot of people riding around wearing gym clothes. I actually like to put outfits together."*
- P-5: *"I guess through my outfits sometimes. Putting together something that is not like the most typical outfit... I always think when I have to dress up for a professional thing or networking thing, I always like to look still obviously professional but a little different there. (I) wear something that not everyone else is wearing, I guess."*
- P-6: *"Well, definitely when I pick out clothing... Also, I work for a boutique, so we do a lot of visual merchandising there, so I have to do a lot of creative work while I am there—like matching outfits."*
- P-7: *"Definitely through my wardrobe."*

However, Participant-1 argued that she expresses her identity through her outfits in some ways but she uses art or design to express her creativity more:

- P-1: *"I do not really consider... I understand how dress expresses myself, but that is not the one thing that I express myself through all the time. I am really excited about ethical fashion. I use it as more like a conversation starter when someone compliments me on something that I wear. 50% of the time, it is from Goodwill or from a fair-trade company. So, I really enjoy that and get into conversation, but I do not use dress as the way to express myself. I use more art or design to do that."*

Except the outfits, participants enumerate their habits or daily activities that express their creativity:

- P-1: *"I like to draw, I like to do a few sketches usually a day—just really quick. Nothing that takes a lot of effort because I am usually tired after designing all day in my classes. (laugh) Sometimes it takes all of my creative ways."*

- P-4: *“I express my creativity a lot through my hand writing and calligraphy. I have a little journal that I draw something on and have my planner. I like to keep things fun and organized. I mean... my room too. I like to rearrange it a lot. I like to decorate and add new decor items. I have only rearranged completely once this semester but I am always adding new things.”*
- P-6: *“I like to cook too so I like to make up recipes and be creative in the kitchen with what ingredients I can use.”*
- P-7: *“Through platforms of social media, I like to log a lot. Actually, I created a blog for this. (laugh)”*

(3) ‘Q 6. Please evaluate your creativity level on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 is the minimum and 10 is the maximum)’

Participants were asked to evaluate their creativity level on a scale of 1 to 10. The range of the scale was 6.5 to 8.5 which is relatively high. Participant-7 gave herself 8.5 points out of 10 and she ranked the second highest in the average creativity tests scores (71.5/100) among all participants. Participant-1 gave herself high marks for her creativity level—8 out of 10—and she actually got the highest average score (73/100) in the creativity tests. Table 11 on the following page shows the scores that participants self-evaluated on their creativity and the average scores that they earned from the first and second creativity tests:

Table 11

Self-evaluated Scores for Creativity and the Average Scores Participants received from the Creativity Tests

	Self-evaluated Scores	The average scores from the creativity tests
P-1	8	73
P-2	7.5	70
P-3	6.5	58.5
P-4	7	65
P-5	6.5	64.5
P-6	7	62
P-7	8.5	71.5

The Correlation Between Perspectives on the Number of Items for the Capsule Wardrobe and the Creativity Scores

In the second in-depth interview for the question ‘*Do you think that the number of items you selected for your capsule wardrobe was enough? Why or why not?*’ five participants said that they think the number was enough and the other two said it was not enough.

(1) 1st Group said enough

Participant-1, -2, -4, -5, and -7 were included in the first group and they all agreed that the items they selected for their capsule wardrobe were enough to live with for 8 weeks. Interestingly, the first group of participants got the higher scores or stayed the same in their second creativity tests:

- P-1: “*I could have gone smaller. I did not wear a few of the things—I noticed. I did not really wear my lighter jacket. I do not know if I wore it 1 or 2 times. The weather got so cold and I only wore my puffy coat. I also did not wear my*

heels. I think I only wore two of my shoes out of four. So I think I could have gone down."

- P-2: *"Yes, I think it was enough. I never really felt more limited than before I did the project. There were a couple times, like my birthday, when I wanted to wear something else that was not in my capsule wardrobe but that was only one time out of the entire 8 weeks. I think I had enough choices to get dressed. I wore the same outfit (only) once or twice."*
- P-7: *"I do think it was enough because I was wearing something different every day for 8 weeks. If I had had more, I almost would have been overwhelmed in choosing it. I think 33 is a good number."*

Some participants pointed out that the number was enough, but they wished the items would have been selected better:

- P-4: *"I think I did not really select the right items which made it more difficult. The pieces that I picked out were not the pieces that all layered well together even though I thought that they were going to be at the beginning. If I could start completely over and completely redo it, I would pick a lot of basic things."*
- P-5: *"I think the number was enough. Definitely there were some items that I wore total 3 or 4 times over the 8 weeks. Well, I think I could have done a better job in selecting items. But I think 33 was enough which is surprising."*

(2) 2nd Group said not enough

Participant-3 and Participant-6 said that the number of items in their capsule wardrobes was not enough. In contrast to the first group, participants in the second group got the lower scores in their second creativity tests:

- P-3: *"I would probably say 'No'. I think it could be (33), but it should be categorized more of 'by item'. For example, you are allowed 6 pairs of jeans or pants, 11 tops... So, there is a certain number of actual categories rather than an overall number. I think it would have been better and more doable if I had more items in my wardrobe. I only have one bag in my capsule wardrobe and it was limited. It would be nice to have at least two options per category."*

- P-6: *“I thought it was going to be enough in the beginning and it seemed like it was going to be enough, but I would say 'NO'. Looking back now, I wish it would be 40 items rather than 33. I think a few more (items) would have been helpful because my strategy was to have as few shoes and handbags as possible so that I can have more shirts and pants. But it still did not seem like enough.”*

Self-perception of Changes in the Level of Creativity Before and After the Project

Participants were asked if they think that there was any change in their creativity level before and after participating in the capsule wardrobe project. Participants were not informed of their creativity tests' scores. Participants said that they are not sure whether any significant changes in their general creativity happened to them. However, all of them confirmed that they got more creative in terms of creating outfits and using clothing items and accessories.

- P-2: *“So I feel like I have been thinking more in terms of creativity. I think it is related to my clothing and thinking more about what I can do with the clothes I have. I am trying to make those differences. I have not changed anything yet, but I want to. I think my creativity has been stimulating.”*
- P-3: *“I do not know.... I do not know as far as my creativity levels go if anything would have changed. I think my perspective has changed. I guess putting different outfits together—considering that creative. I think I am more open to a lot of things. My creativity within clothing has gone up but I do not know if it would translate outside my wardrobe.”*
- P-4: *“I think there probably is. I have not tested it but, as the project went on, I definitely feel like with my outfits got a little bit more creative.”*
- P-6: *“I think I got more creative with accessories like using scarves as shawls and tops in a sense and using socks on leggings as more decorative. (Using) Scarves, hats, socks and more accessories to change the outfit verses wearing the same things over and over again. It was helpful since it was winter so that I could use those things.”*

Interpretation of Findings from Creativity Tests, Daily Journals, and In-depth Interviews

Positive Attitudes and Increase of the Level of Creativity

Participants who had positive attitudes during the project were able to maintain or improve their creativity level. Right after creating the initial capsule wardrobes, participants were asked to respond whether they were satisfied with what they had selected. Five participants who were satisfied with their item selection also received the higher scores or stayed the same in their second creativity tests. On the other hand, two participants (P-3 and P-6) said that they were not fully satisfied with what they had selected for their capsule wardrobes. For example, P-3 said that she would like to have plain black jeans with no holes instead of the dark jeans that she selected. P-6 said that she would have liked more variety.

In the middle of the project, participants were asked to share any thoughts or feelings about the project. Again, five participants presented their excitement and positive attitude toward the project while the other two participants—P-3 and P-6—mentioned how they were struggling with the challenge.

After the project ended, the following question was asked: *“Do you think that whatever the number of items you selected for your capsule wardrobe was enough? Why or why not?”* The same five participants said that the number was enough whereas the other two who were challenged said that the number was not enough.

The first group of participants whose overall attitudes were positive got 5.6 points higher scores in their second creativity tests. The second group of participants who had negative attitudes throughout the project got 10.5 points lower scores in their second creativity tests.

The Total Average Number of Created Combinations of Daily Outfits

Creating an outfit with the limited number of items is like finding all possible options. Except the first week when participants spent time creating their capsule wardrobes, they had 49 days to live with the limited wardrobes. In that time, participants created an average total of 40 different combinations of daily outfits.

Participants were not forced to create different outfits every day. P-4 who got 4 points higher in her second creativity test created 55 ensembles which is the highest number of ensembles created. She tried to change her outfits up to three times a day according to her mood or event of that day. On November 18, 2017, she created two different ensembles of clothing according to different activities of the day (See Figure 23 on the following page). In her journal, she explained the reason:

“I picked the first outfit to be really comfortable for going to a coffee shop and studying all day. My day outfit was very casual and a pretty typical outfit for me to wear on a laid-back day. My second outfit I styled for a work Christmas party. The dress code was pretty casual for a work Christmas party, but I still wanted to look chic and put together.”



Figure 23. Different Styles of Outfits that Participant-4 Created on November 18, 2017

The Average Number of Clothing Items Used in Their Assembly

The total number of outfits that participants created is important but, at the same time, it is necessary to see how many items that they used in their assembly. The level of creativity of participants who used an average of 4-6 different items (4.8 on average) at once to create an outfit increased or stayed the same while the level of creativity of participants who used only 3-4 items (3.5 on average) in their assembly decreased. The one who used the most items at once was Participant-2. P-2 got the second highest score (70 of 100) in the first creativity test and she got the same score in the second test. P-2 used 6 items on average when she created her daily outfits. There were some days that she arranged 7 items into her ensemble. Figure 24 is one of the examples of outfits for which 7 items were used. This was created on October 31, 2017.



Figure 24. Outfit of Participant-2 Created with 7 Items

In her journal, P-2 shared her feeling about the outfit that she created as follows:

“I felt creative in this outfit, and I felt different than the other people I saw in my classes, which I liked. I have not worn this outfit before. I have only worn this dress once before, but I cannot remember how I wore it. This was a new outfit. I like mixing patterns and felt like the stripes and the green and the leopard went fine together. I wanted to layer my clothes because it was so cold this morning. I also was immediately drawn to these pants—they were the first thing I put on. Then I put on the striped shirt. The striped shirt is a little big for me and I wanted to look a little nicer than what the baggy striped shirt would do. I thought about a shirt (item 11 or 12) over the striped shirt but that felt too masculine and too easy. I wanted to feel feminine today, so I wore the dress. The jackets that I have right

now are not very warm, so I chose the leopard sweater to stay warm. I chose the jacket because I really like the color of it with what I was wearing. And I love the green boots and I thought they looked cool with the cut of my jeans.”

The reason why P-2 could create more diverse outfits was because she had selected a more diverse wardrobe—diverse in colors, patterns and styles—than other participants. Other participants’ capsule wardrobes were more monotonous especially in color; mostly they were black, grey and white. Therefore, the outfits that she created had a wide range of styles resulting in a different look.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings and analysis of findings from creativity tests, daily journals, and pre-interview to answer the second research question of this study: *How does the daily practice of dressing with a capsule wardrobe affect one’s creativity?*

Based on the several theories that previous researchers suggested, creativity of ordinary people can be enhanced by practicing daily exercises such as dressing—creating different outfits every day by combining items of clothing.

The scores of two creativity tests that were completed before the project began and after the project ended were compared to determine any changes in participants’ creativity. Four participants among seven received higher scores in their second creativity tests; one participant stayed the same; and two participants received lower scores.

Through the finding from journals and interviews, three significant results were derived:

Participants Who Had Positive Attitudes During the Project Were Able to Maintain or Improve Their Creativity Level

According to the daily journals, participants who were satisfied with their capsule wardrobes and had positive attitudes toward the project got higher scores or stayed the same in their second creativity tests. On the other hand, participants who were dissatisfied with their wardrobes and felt themselves struggling and challenged to create outfits with limited items got lower scores in their second creativity tests.

No Matter the Level of Creativity, All Participants Created on Average 40

The average number of combinations of outfits that the participants created for seven weeks (49 days) was 40. This number showed that all participants endeavored to create different outfits every day during this project although there are differences among participants. Participant-4 created 55 different ensembles of clothing in total while Participant-6 created 30.

There Was a Difference in the Change in the Level of Creativity Depending on How Many Items Participants Used at Once to Create an Outfit

The level of creativity of participants who used an average of 4-6 different items (4.8 on average) at once to create an outfit increased or stayed the same while the level of creativity decreased for participants who used only 3-4 items (3.5 on average) in their assembly.

Participant-2 used an average of six different items when she created her ensembles. P-2 got the second highest score (70 of 100) in the first creativity test and her score stayed the same in the second test. There were some days that she layered 7 items into her ensemble. Participant-3 only used an average of three items in her ensembles. Her second creativity test score decreased by 13 points from the first one.

These results show that there was a significant impact of the capsule wardrobe practice on the change of participants' creativity especially in the way of dressing with or without acknowledging this change.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF PRE-AND POST-INTERVIEWS

Introduction

In this chapter, to answer the third research question, key findings, analysis and interpretation of findings from pre-and post-interviews with the seven volunteer participants will be discussed. Findings from two in-depth interviews will be analyzed and interpreted. Research question three states:

(3) What do participants perceive are the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe—i.e. motivation for engaging in the activity, interest in sustainability?

This question was asked in order to examine what was behind the phenomenon of a capsule wardrobe. In other words, the researcher tried to explore why participants engaged in this capsule wardrobe challenge and what the advantages and disadvantages of this challenge were from their perspective.

This is a case study that aims to describe more than one case in depth in order to solve this research problem. To have rich and comprehensive understandings about the case of each participant, two in-depth interviews were conducted.

The pre-interview was completed in the first week of 8-week capsule wardrobe project—right after participants completed creating their capsule wardrobes—to mainly understand the motivations of engaging in this project and their expectations for this

project. The post-interview was completed after the project ended. This interview was focused on their overall impression of the capsule wardrobe project and the benefits and limitations they perceived from the project.

Findings from the Pre-Interview

After creating their capsule wardrobe and before they actually began wearing their wardrobes, participants were asked for their first in-depth interview (see APPENDIX G). Interviews were done individually in 205 McNeal Hall at the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. Interviews were recorded by a mobile phone recorder and field notes were taken during the interviews. Interviews were conducted between October 26, 2017 and November 2, 2017. Each interview consisted of nine open-ended questions and it took approximately 30 minutes. Participants had the right to refuse to respond to questions that they did not want to answer.

The Quantity of Clothing Items in Original Closets of Participants

One of the challenges for this capsule wardrobe project was to reduce the number of items in participants' wardrobes to 33 or fewer. To understand how many items they reduced, participants were asked to estimate the total number of clothing items that they had in their original wardrobes. Participant-1 said that she had 200-250 in her wardrobe before creating the capsule wardrobe. Participant-2 said that she had 70-80, Participant-3 had 120, Participant-4 had 200-250, Participant-5 had 150-200, Participant-6 had 200. Therefore, the average quantity of clothing items that participants said they owned in

their wardrobes before creating their capsule wardrobes was 160 and participants reduced to 33 items which was a significant reduction.

Motivations of Participating in the Capsule Wardrobe Project

Participants mentioned various backgrounds and reasons why they were motivated to participate in this capsule wardrobe project. These three motivational factors were found:

(1) Interest in sustainability

Participant-1 and Participant-2 mentioned that they decided to engage in this capsule wardrobe project because of their interest in sustainability. P-1 became more aware of sustainability since she was minoring in sustainability. Also, her experience of working at a fair-trade company and of learning the importance of sustainability made her realize the seriousness of environmental pollution and social problems caused by the fashion industry. She said that she had been looking at this kind of project and she finally resolved to challenge herself through participating in this study:

- P-1: *“I started minoring in sustainability last spring. The summer before that, I was interning for a design company and they were a fair-trade (company) and I learned a lot while I was there—the negative impact the fashion industries was having. And then, I started to do my own research and just finding out how wasteful and polluting it is. I am wanting to do something that makes a difference. And it is just my major, so I feel responsible for changing the effects that the fashion industry has on the environment. And I have been kind of looking at it but did not feel like I had time to set it up, I guess. And then I saw this and then actually having that commitment made it possible for me.”*

Participant-2 considers herself as a sustainably conscious person. She said that she mostly shops at thrift or consignment stores, but she likes to have clothes a lot which she thought was a challenge for her. She believed that this capsule wardrobe project could be a feasible way of practicing sustainability:

- P-2: *“I have a strong interest in sustainability in fashion and I know that having a capsule wardrobe is one way to practice that. And I never thought that it would be feasible for me because I like to have clothes. I buy most of my clothes (from) thrifted or consignment or second-hand stores and I feel like (this is) the sustainability part I already have. I am on a good path... but then I like clothes a lot. I like to have them around and having options, so I did not really think that it was possible, but I wanted to challenge myself.”*

(2) Pursuit of simplicity

Three participants mentioned that a smaller wardrobe might simplify the process of getting dressed every day. Participant-2 expected that this project could make the way of getting dressed easier and less time consuming. She also mentioned that she was wondering how this project would influence her relationship with her clothes:

- P-2: *“I was wondering if it would make getting dressed easier and less time consuming even though it was not super time-consuming right now but... (I am) just curious to see how it would change my relationship with my clothes and getting dressed.”*

Participant-3 said that she wanted to get a smaller sized wardrobe by narrowing down items that she actually wears through practicing her capsule wardrobe. She expected that this project could help her to sort out her stuff that she wants and does not want:

- P-3: *“I have tried to get a smaller wardrobe anyways because I tend to work with more classic pieces like timeless rather than following trends. Because I found that if I buy a trendy shirt, I wear maybe a couple of times and I do not have any use for it, so I just donate it. So, I like to really narrow down what I actually wear and then think about what stuff I could put away at the end of the project. I probably will donate a lot of stuff that I do not want.”*

Participant-5 said that she wanted to challenge herself to minimize her wardrobe and to create outfits with limited items. She was excited to see the ensembles that she could create with her capsule wardrobe:

- P-5: *“I wanted to see what kind of outfits I could create and if I could start to minimize my wardrobe in general.”*

(3) Positive prior similar experiences

All participants had no previous experience in a capsule wardrobe project but three of them had similar experiences or indirect experiences that impacted them positively. Participant-4 watched a documentary on minimalism and capsule wardrobes. Also, her sister who had a double-sized wardrobe that she had reduced because of moving to another state to study. These inspirations made her engage in this project:

- P-4: *“I actually watched a documentary over this summer on minimalism. I forgot what is called but they talked about the 33-piece wardrobe. And my sister did it because she is going to UC Berkley and she has a very small closet there. She probably had double my wardrobe size; she has a lot of items (in her closet). She has 20 pairs of jeans maybe. (laugh) It is really crazy! She narrowed her wardrobe down to 33 pieces. So, I kind of wanted to try this and I have been always interested in narrowing down the amount of stuff I have. So, it was a good way to get to experience that.”*

Participant-5 and 7 both had an experience of having a smaller wardrobe when they went abroad—although it was not as small as 33. Through these previous

experiences, they learned that they could live with a minimized wardrobe and it gave them confidence in challenging themselves for this project.:

- P-5: *“When I went abroad last semester, I pretty much had a capsule wardrobe when I was there because I could only bring things that could fit in my suitcase. So, I thought, ‘Oh, I could just do that again!’ I have already done this before and I could get paid to do it, so it was no hassle to do again.”*
- P-7: *“Well, I went abroad last May to Copenhagen, Denmark and I loved how people were so minimalistic there. Before I went there, I kind of looked at their street style to know what I should be wearing. And I kind of created the capsule wardrobe before my trip because it was 3 weeks. So, I wanted to pack light... (because) I just did not have to carry a bunch of things with me. So, that (experience) motivated me.... Because I really liked how they (people in Copenhagen) did it there. It seemed like they were kind of consuming higher quality things and less quantities and I like that idea a lot.”*

The Time Spent Creating a Capsule Wardrobe and Difficulties

Most participants said that they were surprised by how it was easier than they had thought at the beginning, but then they experienced difficulty when they had to select the last several pieces at the end of creating their capsule wardrobes.

Participant-1 spent approximately three hours putting together her wardrobe. She said:

- P-1: *“It started off really easy because I wanted to include everything that I love and all the things that I knew that I want to wear a lot. And then, once I hit around 30 pieces, there were still 7 pieces (that I wanted to add) that were kind of up in the air and I did not know which one I should pick... (There was) a lot of back and forth so it took me a few extra days to just sort out 2 or 3 pieces. (laugh)”*

Participant-2 said that it took her about 30 minutes of actually going through her closet. She had thought of potential pieces all throughout the day and the actual creation went quickly. Also, she said that it was fun and easy—easier than what she thought:

- P-2: *“Ok. So, I got 30 items and then I had 3 left to choose. And it was honestly difficult to choose those last three because I felt solid about what I had already. I think I liked to assume that those last three pieces were like... threw everything off something. However, I would like to say that I did not really experience a lot of difficulties. It was more fun than anything. It was not as hard as I thought it was going to be. I was surprised. Ask me in 4 weeks how I am feeling and maybe I will be like 'Phew!' (laugh)”*

Participant-5 also spent 30 minutes creating her capsule wardrobe. As Participant-1 and -2 said, she mentioned that it was difficult to pick the last couple items for her capsule wardrobe:

- P-5: *“You know, it is surprisingly easier than I thought—picking general items like my shoes, jackets, pants. But then when I came to the very end, last couple items... the end was hard. But, a lot of it was not as hard as I thought overall.”*

Participant-6 spent only 20 minutes for selecting the items of her capsule wardrobe and she had a hard time narrowing down her final items:

- P-6: *“I picked out all the clothes that I was going to use, and then I forgot that like 'oh, I need to have shoes and one handbag at least.' So then I was, 'Ok. Now I have to get rid of some clothes.' It was hard to narrow it down to what I am going to wear the most.”*

Participant-7 spent about two hours creating her capsule wardrobe. Although she was not able to include some items that she was considering for her capsule wardrobe, she said it was not a big problem for her since she learned how to do that when she went abroad:

- P-7: *“I was deciding between a few pieces at the end. I had probably like 5 or 6 that I did not include that I was considering. But it was easy since I learned the strategy when I went abroad. When I was there (Denmark), it was definitely like, 'Ok. I needed more of this or I needed less of this.' So, I feel like that part (selecting and narrowing down) was easier for me.”*

Participants created their capsule wardrobes in October 2017 which was the time to start getting cold in Minnesota. Due to the weather change, participants had to carefully consider when they selected the items:

- P-1: *“And then shoes were hard because, practically, I should have picked more snow-safe—like Minnesota shoes (laugh). But I actually like heels a lot.”*
- P-5: *“...I guess the weather too. I did not really anticipate the best, I guess. But, that was after I created it. I think it would be hard adding in because I want to add all these other things I wish I would have added first. I will see what happens. (laugh)”*
- P-6: *“And also thinking just in the case of if it rains, so I need a rain jacket... and it is going to be winter, so I need to include my winter jacket even though I might not be wearing it right now. So, that was kind of difficult to be prepared for circumstances that could come up.”*

Some of the participants said that they had to consider whether the items would match each other since it was a challenge to create different ensembles every morning with the limited wardrobe:

Participant-4, who spent about half an hour to choose her items for the capsule wardrobe, said that she tried to put pieces that are basic and layered:

- P-4: *“...making sure everything was going to go together and making sure that I have enough layering pieces because I put a couple basic T-shirts. When I first did (made) it, I was like 'OK! This is good!' But then I was like, 'wait, I have no basics. I am getting run out of the thing to wear so fast! I cannot layer any of these things with each other.' So, I had to re-evaluate and add some other pieces in.”*

Participant-3 spent four hours creating her capsule wardrobe and she said that she considered functional aspect of her clothing and selected key pieces that she always wears:

- P-3: *“I noticed I had a lot of similar items that are all black. Then, choosing which ones I really wore because I interchange them. So, making more functional choices was kind of hard. Colors was not too difficult because I did not have much to choose from (laugh). And then, I have a few key pieces that I always wear so those were no brainers; I automatically put them in.”*

Participant-1 said that her capsule wardrobe included items that she had worn often as well as that she had not worn for several years. However, they were all basic items. Participant-7 mentioned that she picked items that were already confirmed as “easy to be matched” items—mostly black. She also added some colors:

- P-1: *“I picked things that I wore every day and things that I have not worn for years which is really interesting to me. Just after trying to think of outfits, different combinations, I picked a lot of basic stuff. I think that is important for layering.”*
- P-7: *“I have a rack in my room with clothes that are all black and all matched to each other, so... it was kind of a decor piece in my room. So, I selected from that rack because they already match each other. And then, I went in my actual closet that have different colors, grabbed more things out of there and then put them together.”*

Expectations for the Project

Participants shared their expectations for the project. Some participants expected to learn wardrobe strategies, change in shopping habits, live a simple and minimal life, and have a better understanding of their relationship to and quality of their clothes through experiencing the capsule wardrobe:

- P-1: *“I want to see how I do with the limited wardrobe. It has only been a week, but so far, I feel like I am pretty confident (laugh). Well, let us see in a month how I am feeling but... I think so far (it) pretty inspires to.... definitely cut down on my stuff—having it out of my closet, storing it or putting it in drawers.... Because sometimes it is just too much clutter... I just feel like more organized because in the morning it is not like a mess and I am not frustrated to find out the one thing that I was thinking of. I expect to get a better understanding of what I actually need (for my wardrobe) and understanding what is important and looking at pieces and thinking about quality.”*
- P-2: *“Expectations... I expect my relationship with clothes to change because I love even like windows shopping and looking at clothes online and thinking about buying them. And I love going into secondhand stores and buying stuff that is really affordable and adding that. So, I am kind of expecting myself to move away from that and realizing that what I have is enough. And I am expecting myself to wear outfit combinations that I have not (tried). And I might be a little bit bolder in what I wear. I like to wear different outfits every day. So, I think with this, I am going to have to wear things that I have not worn together like layering things differently. Also, I hope to earn new appreciation for the products in my closet. I kind of expect and hope that I start to treat my items a little bit better and launder them more frequently and better.”*
- P-3: *“Be able to minimize my wardrobe. I had an internship in a more sustainably based company so it was all about having key pieces rather than unethical production of different fast fashion products. So, I think a sustainable fashion is... when it comes to me that I wear them often, I wear them for a long time but also that means getting clothes that are decently well-made. And I am trying to focus on not buying things from fast fashion shops like Forever 21 or H&M because it is mass made so it is not really unique. Also, I used to buy a lot of stuff that I would just buy it because I like it, even if it did not fit me well.”*
- P-4: *“I want to prove myself that I can do it! (laugh) Because it has been something that I have been thinking about doing for a while, but I have always thought that there was no way I could live with only 33 pieces. So, I am excited to see that I am going to do it!”*
- P-5: *“I expect to see my patterns, styles and how I dress myself. And... the types of clothes that I purchase.”*
- P-6: *“My expectations are that I am going to learn to live with less things and be content. I will want to buy more things that are durable and long-lasting*

than have cheap items that do not last long time. Also, buy clothes that can go with a lot of different things. And I hope I could become more creative with how I wear my outfits and what I pair with because it is going to get difficult as they go on... like to not wear the same thing over and over again.”

- P-7: *“I definitely want to learn how to manage the capsule wardrobe through this project because I do not know where I am going to end up after graduation and I feel like if I am relocating, I really need to downsize on a lot of my things. Also, I just want to do that because I think living minimally would be a lot more less overwhelming and less stressful than having a bunch of things. I kind of want to make lifestyle habit. Ideally, I really like the whole tiny house movement and I feel like I would be completely satisfied doing that for few years. Not like living in a tiny house but just having a small place and having less things. I think that would be really cool experience. So, I like to learn how to successfully do a capsule wardrobe. So then, maybe for the future, I could downsize my closet.”*

Findings from the Post-Interview

The post-interview was conducted after the 8-week capsule wardrobe project ended to understand their overall impression and personal experiences of managing a capsule wardrobe (see APPENDIX H). As with the first interviews, it was done individually in 205 McNeal Hall on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. It was conducted between December 12, 2017 and December 14, 2017. The interview consisted of 13 open-ended questions and it took approximately 30 minutes. Participants had the right to refuse to answer any questions that they might feel uncomfortable answering. Interviews were recorded by a mobile phone recorder and field notes were taken during the interviews.

People's Reactions to Their Capsule Wardrobes

All participants shared the reactions or compliments on their outfits that they received from people around them. People Around them—their family, roommates, classmates—did not recognize that they were wearing the limited clothing items. No one told or asked them why they were wearing the same things every day no matter some people were aware that they were participating in a capsule wardrobe project and wearing limited items of clothing:

- P-1: *"I had comments like, 'Oh, you are doing really good job. I have not noticed that you are wearing the same things!' Few people told me that. Some people also told me, 'Your style is so classic, put-together...' but they did not asked me that why I am wearing the same things."*
- P-2: *"Two weeks ago, I was in class and I was talking about this capsule wardrobe project with someone and one of my classmates said, 'Oh, I had no idea you were doing that. I would not have been able to tell with your outfits' Because he was saying that he had not seen me in the same outfit twice. He said that it did not seem like I was wearing the same thing every day. And I live with my boyfriend and he sometimes took pictures of my outfits at nights, but he never really recognized (that I was wearing the same things in my capsule wardrobe). Every time he asked me, 'Is this the part of your capsule wardrobe too?' (laugh)"*
- P-3: *"No. I actually did not have anybody ask why I am wearing the same things. I told my co-workers (that I was doing this capsule wardrobe project) so they knew that, and my friends knew as well. The majority of people knew that I was in it but (they) thought like 'She is getting dressed every day!' They thought that it was really cool and it was a really interesting idea."*
- P-4: *"Other than people who I told, no one said, 'Hey, you wore that sweater three times! What's going on?' Rather I did get a lot of compliments from people who sat next to me in classes about my layering! (smile) The girl said the other day, 'You know? I have been really loving layering that you have been doing. You look so nice!' I said 'Thanks!' All my roommates also complimented me like 'Oh, you really got new style going here with all these layerings. I like it!' I have definitely been layering more because I have to make 33 pieces look different every single day. And people have been noticing*

that I have been layering but no one said, 'Oh, you have been wearing the same few pieces over and over again.'"

- P-7: *"My roommates have been asking me 'Are you wearing a capsule wardrobe?' When I said 'Yes,' they were like 'Really? That looks different. I have not seen that! I did not know that item was in there.' They thought I was supposed to be wearing the same clothes all the time but I am not."*

Clothing Consumption During the Project

An interesting finding was that no one purchased a new piece of clothing during this project although they were not forced to do that. The only regulation that the participants had was to have 33 items of clothing in their wardrobes and wear them for 7 weeks. The researcher did not control their clothing consumption, but participants controlled their purchasing with or without being aware of it. There was no question like *"Did you purchase any new clothing during this product?"* in the interview but participants shared the following statements about the consumption:

- P-1: *"I did not purchase a new piece of clothing item. I think knowing that I would not be able to wear it helps me stop purchasing. Also, thinking about what I will actually wear a lot—this experience helped me with that."*
- P-2: *"I did not buy anything! That was not even part of the rule (of this project); there was not any rule like, 'Don't buy anything'. But, I had this limited wardrobe and I did not want to buy anything because I knew I could not wear it right away. Also, I thought like, 'Oh, I have so many clothes in my storage right now—more than I probably remember.' I am sure there are so many pieces that I forgot even I have."*
- P-4: *"With this project I felt like, 'I can do it' whereas I felt, 'There is no way I could give up shopping.' But now I feel like I can! I purchased some pajamas and some hair items—which were not included in my capsule wardrobe—but no clothes. Because when I buy stuff I like to wear right away."*
- P-5: *"That is crazy! I do not think I purchased one top or anything during this project which is weird for me! Because I used to purchase at least once a month."*

- P-7: *“I did not feel like I need anything else. I went shopping for gloves a while ago because the weather got cold. I was just shopping purely based on when I need something—like what is missing in my wardrobe.”*

According to the online survey, prior to this project, participants used to purchase new clothing every other month on average. Participants said that there were two main reasons why they were not purchasing anything new. The first reason was that they were not able to wear it right away and the second reason was that they began to think deeply about their actual needs. This experience let participants obviously reduce their thoughtless consumption.

Change in the Interest and Understanding of Sustainability Before and After

Engaging This Project

All seven participants affirmed that they got a better understating of sustainability through this daily practice. They became more aware of how many clothes they have in their closets that they did not actually wear. It also made them think about what they could do with the items that are useless or unwanted:

- P-1: *“I think this showed me that it is really easy to have a smaller wardrobe. Decluttering was really helpful to me and I think that I feel more confident talking to other people about it and knowing that it is possible to have a smaller wardrobe. I recognized when piece are things that I do not need or want to utilize properly, then I can stay away from them. Also, thinking about what I will actually wear a lot—this experience helped me with that.”*
- P-2: *“This project made me realize how many pieces of clothes exist in the world and how it is not difficult to get by on 33 (items of clothing). Even if you have a couple more garments—like 50—it is not that difficult.”*

- P-3: *“It definitely opened my eyes to the amount of clothing that we consistently buy and give away or throw away.”*
- P-5: *“I think definitely this whole project made me realize the amount of clothes that I did not wear over this two-month period. It got me thinking about donating clothes, buying already used clothes, and looking at the quality of clothes that you are buying. I guess my need shifted. While I was doing this project, I was more focused upon what actual outfits I am wearing every day.”*
- P-6: *“I think I have a better understanding of sustainability. (It made me think about) How much waste we go through and how much clothes we buy but we never wear them. Even in my capsule wardrobe, there was stuff that I never worn—even with 33 items. I learned that I am definitely not sustainable in how many clothes I actually have, and I learned that I could live off of only 33 items even though it is challenging; but I can do it if I have to.”*

Most participants (5 out of 7) mentioned about the changes in their perception of clothing consumption and wardrobe needs. They began to consider how much waste that they create with their reckless consumption and how quality over quantity is important:

- P-2: *“I was already thinking about sustainability before this project and trying to be really selective in where I do buy clothes and if I buy new clothes. I thought a lot about why people are buying new clothes and what they are trying to get from that. I definitely want to buy fewer things now. I was wondering if I want to go and buy tons of stuff in a thrift store after this project ends but I do not feel like I will. I want to work with what I have to change.”*
- P-3: *“It made me really think about not only the quantity of clothes that I have in my wardrobe but the quality as well. It made me think about the quality and not just going out and buy really cheap item because it is cheap and cute but will fall apart in 2 weeks.”*
- P-5: *“I think I learned the value of quality over quantity. Not even like quality over quantity but how you use a certain amount of items.”*
- P-6: *“I think I have learned more about how many items are necessary to have in your wardrobe and more about versatility of clothing. Also, purchasing items that can be worn with a lot of different things and not*

purchasing items for one event; thinking like, 'OK, how many times can I wear this? Or, 'What are the different places that I can wear this?'"

- P-7: *"I realized how easy it is to be sustainable even with consuming less. Quality over quantity. Thinking about consuming in terms of how often you are going to wear it and how long it is going to last is a lot more sustainable than consuming fast fashion. I was trying to do that, but I did not think about it how I do now."*

Perceived Benefits That Participants Earned Through This Project

Participants were asked to tell the researcher what the perceived benefits of participating in this project are. They shared various benefits that they have learned.

Participant-1 mentioned about how this project helped her to be more organized and more sustainable:

"Feeling more put-together during the day. I can be more organized in other areas of my life. I think this was a great experience and I will be able to talk to other people and can backup what I am saying about sustainable shopping and clothing. In the future, I will be much more responsible with purchases."

Participant-2 said that she has gained various benefits as an Apparel Design student and fashion consumer:

- (1) *As an Apparel Design student, my understanding of clothing and garments and what they do for us and how important they are has increased. I feel like that will make me a better designer. I got to spend more time with individual pieces of clothing and that helped me get to know them better which I think is good for making clothes.*
- (2) *It made me value my clothes more and have more respect for them; this change makes me feel like I can be a smarter consumer.*
- (3) *My closet was more organized.*
- (4) *I suppose I saved money.*

Participant-3 highlighted that this project let her think deeply about the clothing items in her wardrobe and her consumption pattern. It helped her to be aware of how she should avoid purchasing unnecessary items:

“The main one is being able to purge my wardrobe and really think deeply about what I own. Also, it makes me be a more conscious buyer which translates as money saving in another aspect of life too. Being able to identify and be conscious of not just buying things to buy things. I am definitely a shopper that buys a ton of stuff—I have noticed at least (laugh). It helped me realize that I do that. I also realized that I put stuff in my closet and not wear it. Now, I am more aware of what I am buying. If I am buying similar items... That was actually another thing that I noticed. I have a ton of similar items since I wear a lot of neutrals. I think it made me aware of not buying similar items and considering what I have at home.”

On the other hand, Participant-4 pointed out the changes in her dressing pattern as the perceived benefit:

“Definitely the benefit of being more bold with style choices. Now, I am more willing to try out different things. And people notice when you dress nicely every day and do not wear your gym clothes to class! (laugh) This project made me dress up every day and I got a lot of compliments from people in my classes.”

Participant-5 described how this project made her be more strategic when she gets dressed. Also, by creating the item list, she became more aware of the importance of care instructions:

- (1) *I think I really thought about tops, bottoms, outerwear, jackets... in a different way than I normally did. Usually I just grabbed whatever is in my closet, but I thought a little more strategically about pairing things together.*
- (2) *I do not think I changed or noticeably changed anything in terms of care, but I think I was made aware of when creating the item list, I paid more attention to the garment care and everything. I was not really aware of*

nor checked that information (on a care label) when I buy clothes or wear clothes. I guess I became more knowledgeable about care.

Participant-6 said that she learned the importance of having versatile and higher quality items in her wardrobe:

“I think I learned that you keep your wardrobe to have things that can be worn with many different things. Stuff with high versatility are items that you should be buying and should have in your wardrobe because they can be worn with so many different things and make so many different outfits. And also, buying higher quality stuff so that you can keep wearing it over and over; it is not going to rip, or buttons are not going to fall off.”

Participant-7 mentioned about economic benefits as well as how the capsule wardrobe could make her life simple and creative:

- (1) Being aware of how much money you can save, honestly, on your wardrobe. By just keeping it small, timeless and versatile, you could save so much money and you are not wasting many things.*
- (2) I do not like having a lot of things. I think that is kind of a burden and it makes me a little overwhelmed. And you can learn to live with less.*
- (3) Also, I guess it does make you more creative in a way because you are doing things differently and wearing things differently. You are not wearing what you see on a mannequin in a store which is cool!*

Perceived Limitations That Participants Felt During the Project

Four participants pointed out the limitations of unexpected weather, occasions, and events. In the 5th week of the project, participants had a chance to reorganize their capsule wardrobes and four participants added warmer clothes due to the weather change. As well as the weather, participants mentioned about unexpected events and occasions such as a professional event, trip, funeral, or birthday party:

- P-2: *“I had to go to a funeral and I had a birthday party to go to. Those are the times I felt really limited with my wardrobe because clothes in my wardrobe were nice and I had a couple of dresses and skirts but they did not help me to make an impact that I wanted to make. Also, I wish I had chosen more jackets. I think those are the main limitations.”*
- P-4: *“I think it is hard when there is unpredictable weather. Also, unexpected things are the biggest limitations—trips, weather, events that you have to go to—that you do not have the proper attire in your capsule wardrobe for are the biggest (limitation). I personally did not have any unexpected trips, but I talked to one of the participants of this project though—P-3—and she was telling me that she went to Arizona and all she had was winter things so I was like 'ha-ha!' There was one unexpected event. I attended a mentor program thing and that was a business casual event that I had to go to. I only had jeans and sweaters in my capsule wardrobe, so I wore a pair of slacks that was not included in my capsule wardrobe. That was the only time that I did not wear my capsule wardrobe!”*
- P-7: *“Definitely, seasonal changes. From fall to winter, it got really cold. Also, the fact that I base outfits on weather was probably limiting too. Also, special occasions. If you have something to attend and you have to wear something specific. I did not have any colors in my capsule wardrobe but I have to wear colors for certain events.”*

Participant-3 mentioned about doing the laundry. She said that this project made her do laundry more often than before and it bothered her:

- P-3: *“I think laundry. I own a lot of clothes—no matter if it is workout clothes, sweatpants, or normal clothes—and I hate laundering. However, this project forced me to do laundry more often (laugh). I probably did it twice a week which is not a lot but for the number of items but for me it was a lot. I consistently wore the same pair of pants and I had to wash them obviously.”*

Participant-6 suggested that this project had an impact on her creativity as follows:

- P-6: *“I think it enhanced my creativity to a point and then I feel like I started declining in my creativity because I got lazy and frustrated with trying to figure out outfits.”*

Again, P-6 got 8 points lower in her second creativity test; she felt limited in creating outfits toward the end.

Willingness to Participate in This Project on Their Own in the Future

At the end of the second interview, participants were asked whether they would like to voluntarily continue to participate in the capsule wardrobe project in the future and why or why not. Five participants—P-1, P-2, P-4, P5, and P7—said that they will and two participants—P-3 and P-6—said that they will not. The first five participants who responded positively got higher scores in their second creativity test and the other two participants who responded negatively received lower scores.

Participant-1 and Participant-2 who expressed their intention to continue practicing their capsule wardrobes gave several suggestions and improvements as follows:

- P-1: *“Definitely I will. I would like to up the number a little bit. 8 weeks went pretty fast. I think it was a good period because it challenged me. If it was just one month, I do not think it would have made as big of an impact. I think two months was good. I think I would have kept going longer.”*
- P-2: *“33—the number of items—was OK but switching out every 6 weeks—instead of 8 weeks—will be great.”*

Interpretation of Findings from In-depth Interviews

Findings from in-depth interviews were analyzed to answer the third research question:

Research Question 3: What do participants perceive are the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe, i.e. motivation for engaging in the activity, interest in sustainability?

This question was asked to examine what was behind the phenomenon of a capsule wardrobe. In other words, the researcher tried to explore why participants engaged in this capsule wardrobe challenge and what the advantages and disadvantages of this challenge were from their perspective.

Participants Consider That There Are More Benefits Than Limitations That They Have Earned Through a Capsule Wardrobe Project and the Most Important Perceived Benefit Is That They Became More Aware of Sustainability

There were three main reasons why participants were motivated to participate in the capsule wardrobe project: Interest in sustainability (2 out of 7); Pursuit of simplicity (3 out of 7); Positive prior similar experiences (3 out of 7). In the case of ‘Interest in sustainability’, two participants said that they have a great interest in sustainability and the capsule wardrobe can be one way to gain practice.

Participants mentioned various perceived benefits in their second interviews which were conducted after the project was done. These benefits are mainly related to sustainability. This experience of creating and managing a capsule wardrobe made them

realize how few items they actually wear and how formerly they purchased new clothes without thinking carefully about their impact on the earth. Since participants were college students majoring in Retail Merchandising and Apparel Design, they were interested in sustainability before this project, but all the participants confirmed that this wardrobe challenge changed their perspectives on clothing consumption and wardrobe needs.

When asked to estimate the average number of clothing items in their closets, the average was 160. It is important that participants realized that they are able to live with 33 items of clothing for two months without purchasing a new clothing item. Two of seven participants actually mentioned that this project was money saving. Participants used to buy new clothing every other month on average. They reported that this project did not make them avoid consumption but made them more careful about what they buy. They began to think about the importance of quality over quantity of clothing and whether their consumption is based on their actual needs rather than on impulse.

Besides the consumption, the care of clothes was considered. Participants' wardrobes included several articles of clothing that were purchased from discount stores or fast fashion brands which provide lower quality clothes with affordable prices. Since the participants are college students, they have financial constraints, so it is difficult for them to shop for high end brands. The key lesson that the participants learned is to extend the products' lifetime by valuing and caring for the items that they have in their wardrobes. Also, it made them think about the ways of handling unwanted clothes such as donating.

The Most Prominent Limitation of a Capsule Wardrobe Is Unexpected Weather, Occasion and Events

The limited number of clothing items in a capsule wardrobe was not considered the biggest constraint. Most of the participants (5 out of 7) explained that 33—or fewer—items were enough for them to create their daily outfits for 8 weeks and they never felt limited. However, they pointed out that item selection is important in a capsule wardrobe.

Since the capsule wardrobe project began in October and ended in December, the weather in Minnesota changed dramatically and participants had difficulty planning a wardrobe that is weather-appropriate. Participants did not want to include heavy winter coats or boots in October since they knew that they were not going to wear them until the weather got cold. Therefore, they switched some of their items to winter clothes in the 5th week of the project when they had a chance to rearrange their capsule wardrobes.

Also, participants experienced difficulties in dressing appropriately for special events or occasions such as a trip, professional event, funeral or birthday party because these events happened once or twice during the whole period of the project. Participants are college students, so their capsule wardrobes mostly included casual clothing rather than formal wear. For them, therefore, it was a challenge to create outfits that look professional with the limited items.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed findings, analysis and interpretation of findings from two in-depth interviews with seven participants. These interviews were conducted in the first

week of the 8-week capsule wardrobe project and after the project was completed. The data from interviews were analyzed to answer the third research question of this study: *What do participants perceive are the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe, i.e. motivation for engaging in the activity, interest in sustainability?*

From the pre-interview, three main motivations of voluntarily engaging in this capsule wardrobe project were as follows:

Interest in Sustainability

As they agreed in the online survey, all participants were already interested in sustainability and heard about the concept of a capsule wardrobe before they participated in this project. In the pre-interview, Participant-1 and -2, especially, mentioned that they had been thinking about a feasible way of practicing sustainability and they thought that this capsule wardrobe project was a great opportunity to commit themselves to sustainability as users and students majoring in Apparel Design.

Pursuit of Simplicity

Participant-2, 3, and 5 said that they would like to reduce the size of their wardrobes and simplify the process of getting dressed each day. Before they created their capsule wardrobes, they had a lot of clothes—an average of 160—in their closets, as they had estimated in the first interview. Participant-2 said that getting dressed every day was very time-consuming to her. She expected that the capsule wardrobe would make the process of creating her outfits and getting dressed easier and less time consuming.

Participant-3 said that she wanted to have a smaller sized wardrobe and narrow down her items. She expected to sort out the items that she actually wears through practicing her capsule wardrobe. Participant-5 indicated that she wanted to challenge herself to simplify her wardrobe and see what kinds of ensembles she could create with limited items in her reduced wardrobe.

Positive Prior Similar Experiences

None of the participants had the experience of engaging in the capsule wardrobe project. However, three of seven participants—Participant-4, 5, and 7—had similar experiences with this capsule wardrobe project and it had a positive impact on their perspectives of having a minimized wardrobe. Although Participant-4 did not have her capsule wardrobe before she engaged in this project, she watched a documentary about minimalism and a capsule wardrobe which inspired her to become interested in sustainability and a minimized wardrobe. Both Participant-5 and 7 had actual experience of having limited wardrobes when they went abroad. They had learned through these previous experiences that they were able to live with limited items. They said that this led them to engage in this capsule wardrobe project without hesitation.

From the post-interview, participants shared their overall impression at the completion of the capsule wardrobe project as follows:

Perceived Benefits Related to Sustainability

All seven participants argued that this experience of practicing a capsule wardrobe let them have different perspectives on clothing consumption and wardrobe needs. They began to think more about the quality of clothes than quantity. Participants spontaneously did not purchase any new clothing items while the project was going on. They said that the reasons were because (1) they were not able to wear it right away; and (2) they began to think deeply about their actual needs. This project made them realize that they actually wear limited number of items already and their wardrobes include a lot of unnecessary clothes. Moreover, it made them take care of their items more carefully to extend the lifespan of the product.

Perceived Limitations of Unexpected Weather, Special Occasion and Events

Since they did not have a wide range of item choices, participants affirmed that it was a great challenge for them to dress appropriately for special events including a trip, professional event, funeral or birthday party although it did not happen frequently. This capsule wardrobe projected started in October and ended in December when the temperature drops dramatically in Minnesota. At the beginning of the project, participants did not include heavy winter coats or boots but as the project went on, these items were essentially needed. Hence, when they had a chance to rearrange their capsule wardrobes participants items that are more weather appropriate. Also, since participants were college students, their capsule wardrobes mostly included casual wear so it was challenging to create professional and formal looks by using items in their wardrobes.

However, they stressed that they tried to create their ensembles to look appropriate for any occasion. In the second interview, all participants shared how their family, friends, roommates and classmates complimented their outfits. They said that no one asked why they were wearing the same things every day while participating in the project.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter summarizes and concludes the results of this study based on the three research questions. The chapter also discusses and suggests potential implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Summary

Fast fashion has been linked to the global interest in sustainability in that the glut of mass-produced clothing has encouraged consumers to purchase and discard clothes without consideration for their impact on earth. This consumption pattern has led to various environmental and social problems. U.S. consumers who realized the seriousness of sustainable issues began to voluntarily participate in various capsule wardrobe projects.

Capsule wardrobes limit the number of items available for use for a limited time. Because people who get dressed every day need to consider different factors, such as season, weather, occasion, color, silhouette, and mood the limitation of the capsule wardrobe may encourage creativity in exploring how to meet their needs in getting dressed each day. People are often required to use their creativity to solve everyday problems. This study looked at the wardrobe as a basis of this creativity.

According to previous research, there are two concepts of creativity: Big-C and little-c. Previous researchers support the notion that a person can be trained in little-c creativity. In this study the researcher proposes that little-c creativity can be encouraged

by focusing on activities that the average person may participate in each day. In terms of little-c creativity, dressing can be considered as an accessible daily activity that can influence one's creativity. Scholars like Amabile, Csikszentmihalyi and Epstein argued that there is close relation between dressing and one's way of thinking and acting. They pointed out that dressing can help in developing one's problem-solving skills when wearers repeatedly seek different combinations of outfits. From this aspect, the researcher assumed that experiences of the capsule wardrobe could influence participants' creativity.

This study explored personal experiences of a capsule wardrobe and examined how this daily practice of creating and dressing with limited clothing items can have an impact on sustainability and creativity. To achieve the purpose of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

- 1. What patterns, i.e., in the manipulation of garments and the visual result, emerge for creating different ensembles with limited items?*
- 2. How does the daily practice of dressing with a capsule wardrobe affect one's creativity?*
- 3. What do participants perceive are the benefits and limitations of a capsule wardrobe, i.e. motivation for engaging in the activity, interest in sustainability?*

The capsule wardrobe project of this study borrowed the basic framework from Project 333 which is a minimalist fashion challenge to live with 33—or fewer than 33—items of clothing kept in a wardrobe for three months. The framework was modified to two months (8 weeks) instead of three months, and 33 items included only clothing, shoes and bags—not included were accessories and jewelry. These modifications still

allowed for the capsule wardrobe to be experienced by the students without interfering with their academic schedules.

Seven female volunteer participants were junior or senior students in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota. They were living in Minnesota and had lived in the U.S. for at least 10 years. They had no previous experience of creating and managing a capsule wardrobe. Since they were junior and senior students, they were busy with many things like senior projects that were required for graduation. However, all seven participants completed the project in the 8 weeks and expressed mostly positive attitudes toward the project. However, the project was challenging and demanding for these college students, as expressed by Participant-1 who was a senior student heavily involved in projects required for graduation:

"I really liked it. I feel like since this semester was so busy, it was easy to not have to overthink things in the morning. Also, I feel like I was not as creative in my combinations. So, I think that would have been better if I was more relaxed so every morning I could have time but... I was very stressful, but I definitely dressed better than I would have."

Nevertheless, P-1 had the biggest change in her creativity level. It illustrates that the complexity of each individual's experience should be considered to understand the outcomes of the project.

Several previous researchers in the field of apparel have studied creativity focused on creativity and designing, not the act of dressing. Also, because the concept of a capsule wardrobe is relatively new, more research is needed to understand the benefits and limitations we could get as consumers, educators and students in apparel studies. Since there are few studies on how dressing strategies can influence one's creativity and

how the capsule wardrobe can relate sustainability, the researcher believed that this study would have significant meaning as an educational tool and a means to influence consumption patterns that have led to various environmental and social problems.

Discussion of Important Findings

In order to answer the research questions of this study, multiple data collection methods were used to achieve methodological triangulation, which is a process of using a variety of methods for credibility and validity of the results.

Participants responded to an online survey to collect demographics, shopping habits, wardrobe strategies and the degree of interest and understanding of sustainability. To assess the changes in the level of creativity of each participant, two creativity tests were completed before starting the project and after the project ended. The scores of the first and second creativity tests were compared, and the results were used to support the findings. Other data were collected from journaling and in-depth interviews. Daily journals, that included the selfies of daily outfits and assigned item numbers, were used to analyze the patterns participants used for creating ensembles. Two in-depth interviews were conducted before and after the project that helped the researcher understand participants' overall experience of engaging in the capsule wardrobe project including motivations, perceived benefits, and limitations.

Based on the findings from the analysis of online surveys, creativity tests, journals, and in-depth interviews, the research questions of this study were answered as follows:

Patterns Emerged for Creating Different Ensembles with Limited Items

Regardless of the constraint of item numbers, these various wardrobe strategies and dressing patterns were observed in the capsule wardrobe project of this study: (1) Layering; (2) Versatility; (3) Adding accessories, wearing makeup, and changing hairstyle; and (4) Physical and emotional comfort.

The most evident dressing pattern that was developed by participants was layering. Several participants attempted to layer several pieces of clothing in untraditional ways—i.e. mixing and matching different colors and patterns, layering two turtlenecks together, or layering a sweater over a turtleneck. This strategy of layering allowed participants' outfits to be creative and individual yet provided warmth in cold winter in Minnesota.

After experiencing the capsule wardrobe, participants highlighted the importance of versatility of items in their wardrobes. Participants underlined that versatile items—a black turtleneck, denim shirt, blue jeans, black pants, etc.—are essential for their capsule wardrobes in order to match with different items in various ways. It was clearly reflected in their item selection. Their wardrobes were monotonous and included mostly black and neutral colors.

Accessories and jewelry such as scarves, belts, hats, earrings, or necklaces were not included in the limited number of items in capsule wardrobes. Participants freely used accessories and discovered that they were great tools to make their looks more diverse and individual. Besides accessories, participants tried to make differences in how they appeared by wearing different makeup or changing hairstyles.

From the selections of items, there were certain pieces that participants were attached to more than other pieces of clothing. Usually, those were the items that had significant meaning and unforgettable memories; participants expressed both physical and emotional comfort every time they wore them. Participant-1 said, *“Pieces of emotional significance are the most important. When your clothing has special meaning, it becomes easier to wear without tiring of it.”* Besides aesthetic pleasure that can be given by a silhouette, line, color, texture, or pattern, unforgettable personal stories and memories were significant attachments with clothing items. These allowed participants to wear and care for their pieces more pleasingly and carefully.

The Impact of a Capsule Wardrobe on One’s Creativity

This study showed that the linkages occurred through experiencing a sustainable capsule wardrobe and their creativity as expressed through creativity tests and participants’ experience as observed and reported through journals and in-depth interviews. The scores of pre and post creativity tests that were completed before the project began and after the project ended were compared and used to examine if any change in their creativity occurred and how this change was expressed in their created outfits.

Four of seven participants received higher scores, one stayed the same, and the other two received lower scores in their post creativity tests. Through the findings from journals and interviews, three significant results were derived.

First, participants who had a positive attitude during the project were able to maintain or improve their creativity level. Scores of the second creativity tests of participants who were satisfied with their capsule wardrobes and had positive attitudes toward the project throughout the project increased or stayed the same. On the contrary, the second creativity tests scores were lower for participants who were dissatisfied with their wardrobes and struggled with creating outfits. This result can be supported by Csikszentmihalyi (1997)'s argument that creative individuals differ from one another in a variety of ways, but in one respect they are unanimous—They all love what they do.

Second, for seven weeks—49 days—of the project, participants created an average of 40 different ensembles with limited items in their capsule wardrobes. The largest number of created ensembles was 55 (Participant-4) and the smallest number of created ensembles was 30 (Participant-6). They were not pushed to create different outfits every day but they sought to challenge themselves. This finding showed that the reduced number of clothing items did not limit their creativity, it provided a good stimulus to them.

Third, the level of creativity of participants who used an average of 4-6 different items (4.8 on average) at once to create an outfit increased or stayed the same while the level of creativity of participants who used only 3-4 items (3.5 on average) in their assembly decreased. Participant-2 used an average of six items when creating her outfits while Participant-3 only used an average of three items in her ensembles. P-3 received 13 points lower in her second creativity test. By contrast, P-2 got the second highest score in the first creativity test among seven participants and the score stayed the same for her

second test. She sometimes layered 7 items to create an ensemble. It presented that divergent thinking which is “a liking for thinking that goes in different directions and produces a variety of answers (Merrifield, Guilford, Christensen, & Frick, 1961)” is important factor to enhance creativity.

In the post interviews, all participants confirmed that they became more creative in terms of creating their outfits by combining items of clothing in different ways. These results propose that the experience of practicing the capsule wardrobe could have an impact on creativity especially in the way of dressing, with or without acknowledging it. However, it should be considered that because participants engaged in the project for a short period of time, the shift may be temporary.

Perceived Motivations, Benefits, and Limitations of a Capsule Wardrobe

(1) Motivations

Participants mentioned three major motivations why they decided to engage in this capsule wardrobe project. First, all participants said that they were interested in sustainability from the beginning. A factor may have been that all were students in the College of Design and all had been exposed to various sources related to sustainable issues in different classes they had attended. Participant-1 and -2, especially, mentioned that they had been thinking about a feasible way of practicing sustainability and they thought a capsule wardrobe project would be a great opportunity to commit themselves to sustainability as user.

The second reason was pursuit of simplicity. Three participants—Participant-2, 3, and 5—said that they would like to reduce the size of their wardrobes and simplify the process of getting dressed. They already had a lot of clothes in their closets and Participant-2 said that getting dressed every day is very time-consuming to her. She expected that the capsule wardrobe would make this process easier and less time consuming. Participants were also wondering whether this simplified wardrobe would affect their shopping habits; for example, would this project make them change their item selection in the future?

Lastly, positive prior similar experiences motivated participants. Participant-4, 5, and 7 had positive similar experiences to this capsule wardrobe project which encouraged them to willingly engage in this challenge. Participant-4 watched a documentary about minimalism and a capsule wardrobe. Also, she was inspired by her sister who had reduced her closet, so she had been interested in experiencing this capsule wardrobe. Participant-5 and 7 both had an experience of having a smaller wardrobe when they went abroad—although it was not as small as 33. Through these previous experiences, they learned that they could live with a minimized wardrobe and it gave them confidence to challenge themselves in this project.

(2) Perceived benefits

All participants considered that there were more benefits than limitations of engaging in a capsule wardrobe project. The most important benefit perceived by participants was that they became more aware of sustainability. Participants were

interested in sustainability and were aware of the importance of sustainability as it was one of the motivations for engaging in this project. After experiencing this capsule wardrobe, all seven participants claimed that this experience helped them have different perspectives on clothing consumption and wardrobe needs. Previously they reported that they purchased new clothing items every other month and had an estimated average of 160 clothing items in their closets. They usually shopped for clothing at discount stores, second-hand stores, or fast fashion brands since high-end brands were not affordable because of financial restrictions. However, they began to think more about the quality over quantity and the longevity of a product. None of the participants purchased any new clothing items during this project. They said that the reason was because they began to think deeply about their actual needs. They also started carefully considering ways of extending the lifespan of the product.

(3) Perceived Limitations

The most prominent limitation of their capsule wardrobes according to participants was unexpected weather and limited clothing for special occasions and events. Most participants did not consider that the number 33 was the biggest problem in their capsule wardrobes. Five participants insisted that 33 items were enough for them to live for 8 weeks and they never felt limited. Some of them said that they could have gone smaller than 33. However, they emphasized the importance of item selection.

Participants mentioned that the most prominent limitation they felt during this project was unexpected weather, special occasions, and events. The project started in

October and ended in December when the weather in Minnesota dramatically changes.

That was why participants switched some of their items in their first capsule wardrobes that were thinner and lighter to denser and heavier winter clothes when they had a chance to rearrange their capsule wardrobes in the 5th week of 8 weeks.

Also, since they did not have limited item options, it was a challenge to dress appropriately for special events including a trip, professional event, funeral, or birthday party. However, they tried their best to create outfits by using their creativity so that people around them—their family, friends, roommates and classmates—did not recognize that they kept wearing the same limited clothing items during this project.

Perspectives on Theory of Change

Through the lens of Theory of Change, engaging in a capsule wardrobe can be an accessible and feasible long-term solution for sustainable problems within the apparel industry but the user must be considered. ‘The Starting Situation’ of the capsule wardrobe project found in this study was (1) interest in sustainability; (2) pursuit of simplicity; and (3) positive previous experiences. It motivated them to voluntarily participate in the project (Stands of Action).

There were four assumed competencies that participants could practiced through participating in this project: (1) Challenging (seeks challenges); (2) Capturing (preserve new ideas); (3) Broadening (broaden skills and knowledge); (4) Surrounding (change physical and social environment). Creating and managing their wardrobes with limited items was challenging for the participants. For capturing, participants documented their

experience every day through journaling and taking photographs of their ensemble which they had never had done before. They also participated in surveys, creativity tests and interviews. By learning and developing wardrobe strategies, participants broadened their skills and knowledge of wardrobe management and dressing. Putting new ensembles together every day and rearranging the wardrobe regularly helped them to change their surroundings (Intended Outputs).

Several short-term outcomes of the project were discovered. The experience of practicing a capsule wardrobe made users rethink what they have in their wardrobes, what they wear, and what they need. It could decrease reckless spending for clothing and cause the user to be more sustainably conscious in choosing quality clothes. In addition, the user may prefer to shop for second-hand or vintage clothing rather than buying new (Steps of Change). This would reduce the amount of textile waste which could reduce levels of environmental pollution and economic losses (Intended Outcomes). Also, the project helped individuals develop creative ways of dressing and to express their identity and individuality through their daily outfits (Steps of Change). As it was assumed, individuals could train themselves to improve their creativity through practicing this limited wardrobe on a daily basis. It could possibly challenge the apparel industry to be more creative in what they produce in the future (Intended Outcomes).

The following diagram shows the modified conceptual model of a capsule wardrobe project based on Theory of Change (See Figure 25 on the following page):

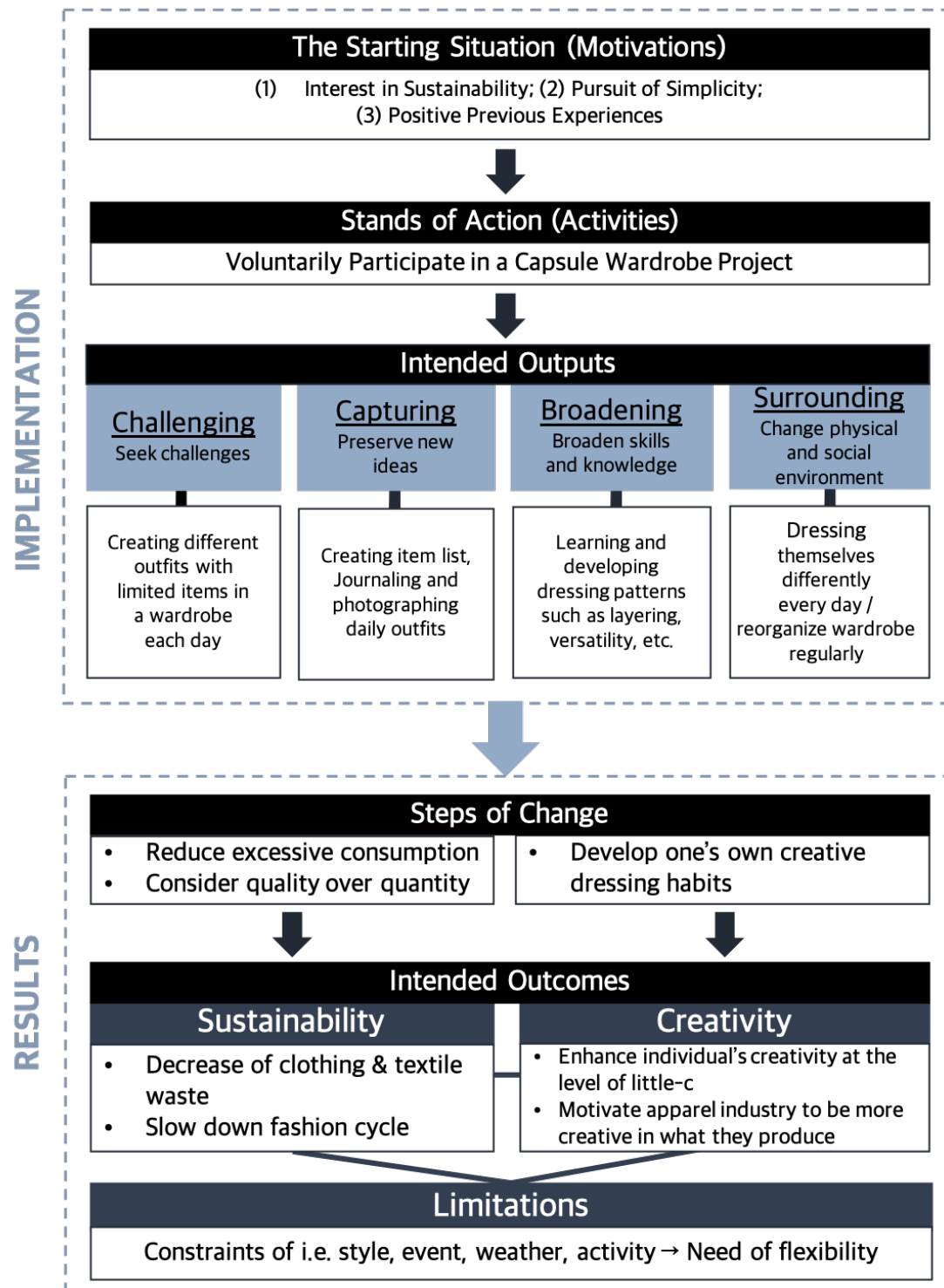


Figure 25. A Revised Conceptual Model of a Capsule Wardrobe Project based on Theory of Change

Conclusion

The role of individuals as users with relation to the apparel industry is becoming more critical. The behaviors of everyday people can have a profound effect on the economy, society, and the environment. Researchers began to realize the importance of the role of the user and have begun to examine how to make the user be more responsible for what they purchase and wear. Research shows that consumers who are overwhelmed by the superabundance of clothes in their closets have begun to participate in sustainable practices like a capsule wardrobe.

This study suggests how individuals could contribute to sustainable practices and how they could have the power to change the domain of fashion by challenging themselves to experience a reduced wardrobe and understanding more deeply the value of their clothing. Even though this research only included a sample of seven volunteer females the conclusion reached was that a capsule wardrobe could be practiced by other populations, if it is flexible.

Flexibility would include not imposing a capsule wardrobe with 33 or fewer items of clothing. The change of seasons that occurred was a factor in this limitation. The participants who began the project in the fall experienced a severe change in the temperature and found this a limiting factor in their wardrobe. Another reason for flexibility was the experience of dressing for special events. Participants felt unduly limited when they discovered they needed to find creative ways not to rely on their clothing, but to be festive using accessories and change in hair style and makeup. Although the capsule wardrobe can limit consumption by using clothing participants

already have in their wardrobes, it does not advocate that purchasing new clothing is unconditionally bad. It simply means that strategic planning about new purchases is required.

But then, at the same time, it is a challenge to think about how the fashion designers and fashion industry could develop sustainably in a future direction. As consumers use their creativity for expression through the way of dressing themselves with clothing items in their closets, fashion designers and retailers should use their creativity to amplify this experience. Furthermore, designers and retailers need to thoroughly understand the personal experiences of the user whose past memories, thoughts and feelings about their everyday experiences will tell what they want, need, and expect. Consumers want to purchase value rather than just more of a product. As the participants of this study showed, people put more value on things that have stories and memories resulting in their keeping things longer. They look for ways to extend the wearing of those items by learning to repair or redesign them. This is what the industry needs to address.

The ultimate goal of a capsule wardrobe is to help consumers realize how much they actually wear from their closets, and to promote reduction of overspending on clothing and purchasing apparel products of higher quality so that they will be worn more often and for a longer time. Beyond that, capsule wardrobe projects let people practice sustainability as users, as well as help them to develop a more individual style, become more creative, confident by creating their daily outfits with limited items.

Csikszentmihalyi (1997) said, “for many people, happiness comes from creating new things and making discoveries. Enhancing one’s creativity may therefore also enhance well-being” (p. 8). He also pointed out, “it is clear from talking to them that what keeps them motivated is the quality of the experience they feel at the time. This feeling often involves painful, risky, or difficult efforts that stretch the person's capacity, as well as an element of novelty and discovery” (p. 9). However, participants in this study concluded that the experience of the capsule wardrobe was worth the effort, if provided with some flexibility with the limitations. The researcher acknowledges that the industry will also need to be creative in producing better, higher quality products, not more product.

Limitations

Several limitations and challenges emerged in this study as follows:

Size of Research Samples

The small sample size may be unreliable or lead to cases of bias. Although it is a case study with the objective to understand each case in depth, seven research samples that were focused upon a limited population may not be enough. A full understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of a capsule wardrobe project and the relationship to one’s creativity resulting from engaging in this project may come from engaging further with expanded populations.

Time Frame for the Project

Eight weeks was not long enough to measure the change in creativity of research participants. Although this study shows that there was a significant impact on changes in creativity by experiencing a capsule wardrobe and how it relates to their dressing habits and attitudes, there is a possibility that these changes happened temporarily. The results could be more distinctively different if the project was conducted for longer than 8 weeks.

Seasonal Differences

There might be differences between seasonal capsule wardrobes—summer vs. winter. All participants engaged in this project during the same seasons—beginning of fall and in the middle of winter (October to December). Since the capsule wardrobe of this study was for fall and winter, there were seasonal characteristics reflected in participants' capsule wardrobes. For example, the colors in capsule wardrobes were relatively darker; participants put many layers together, or unexpected weather—coldness—was one of the most challenge for participants. Different features would likely appear in a summer capsule wardrobe—i.e. brighter colors, lighter materials, more various patterns, less layering, etc.

Demographic Differences

Difference may be caused by demographics such as gender, age, occupation, and culture. There should be distinct characteristics between populations that could be

studied. For example: Do men have as many clothing items as women do in their closets? Do older women already limit themselves to capsule wardrobes, especially living in limited spaces? How could professional women who usually wear formal wear create their ensembles to be individual and attractive with limited items?

The Effect of Compensation

The processes involved in this capsule wardrobe project were time consuming. Therefore, participants received a series of gift cards totaling \$200 as their compensation. Unlike following a general capsule wardrobe project, there were various tasks, besides creating and managing their capsule wardrobes, that the participants needed to complete—i.e., online survey, creativity tests, journaling every day, and in-depth interviews. Although participants engaged in this study voluntarily, compensation could be one of the motivations to participate in the project and a driving force to complete it. One participant-6 explained this motive for participation in her first interview, “And also I knew that I am going to be compensated too. (Big laugh) I have already done this with a limited wardrobe when I went abroad, and now I could get paid to do it, so it was like not a hassle to do it again.” It shows that the level of contribution for some participants could have been different without compensation.

Implications

This study is significant in the field of apparel studies because it shows that managing a capsule wardrobe can be a sustainable action that empowers individuals to

reduce their impact on this planet as well as providing an accessible tool for developing one's creativity. Although this capsule wardrobe project is still in its beginning stages, it is necessary to evaluate efficiency and possible improvements. Furthermore, helping consumers to be aware of the opportunities related to the experience of a capsule wardrobe may help to slow the fast fashion industry that faces various social and environmental problems today.

Follow Up Research of Participants in This Study

Further longitudinal study of these participants is needed to determine how this project may influence their future clothing consumption habits and wardrobe strategies as well as the effect on the careers of students majoring in design and merchandising. It would be necessary to examine whether changes in their creativity and benefits that they perceived affected their attitudes toward clothing and work. For example, "Does it have a positive impact on their senior projects?", "Do their careers change as a result of this experience?"

A User Perspective

There are different perspectives on sustainability. From a user perspective, it is important to consider how to purchase and wear clothes and how long they keep things in their wardrobes. This research can help users get the idea of how they could practice sustainability through engaging in a capsule wardrobe project in their daily lives. This research provides a chance to understand the process of creating and managing the

capsule wardrobe and experience a capsule wardrobe as to possible benefits and limitations. The capsule wardrobe could promote sustainable practices, reduce over consumption, and suggest feasible ways of having a positive impact on the environment, culture and society at the individual level.

Capsule Wardrobes in Other Populations

As mentioned in limitations, demographic differences possibly produce different results in experiencing a capsule wardrobe. Further research can be a comparative study on experiencing a capsule wardrobe between two different demographic groups. Therefore, expanding participation to other populations than students, for example, males, older generations, professionals, or people in other cultures, would be the next step in learning how people may creatively manage a capsule wardrobe.

As an Educational and Self-Learning Tool

This research can be used as a framework to develop an educational tool for apparel design studio classes. For example, students could be asked to develop a design line for a capsule wardrobe which was versatile and timeless, yet creative and representable. This can be a great challenge for students as future designers to think deeply about innovative sustainable design. As with the participants of the capsule wardrobe project, students should find and suggest different ways of wearing their limited pieces of clothing as creatively as possible. It would be interesting to see how this educational framework could improve students' creativity and concern for sustainability.

This study also proposes the possibility of enhancing one's creativity by challenging oneself to create different ensembles with a limited closet. This shows that it is an appropriate tool for helping everyday people including participants of this study to have an opportunity to develop their creative thinking skills through this self-training experience.

Ultimate Guide to a Capsule Wardrobe and Wardrobe Strategies

This study aimed to let participants learn wardrobe strategies and develop their creative dressing habits through experiencing their own capsule wardrobes. Because the focus of this study was learning, not training, the researcher did not provide specific guidelines for selection of an ideal capsule wardrobe, or to successfully create daily outfits with limited items. However, definitive guidelines could be developed for people who want to create their capsule wardrobes based on the findings of the study. In addition, this study could provide a variety of ideas on how to dress oneself even to people in general who do not participate in a capsule wardrobe project.

Guideline for Apparel Industry

This research suggests a clear direction for the future. For example, this research could help the apparel industry awaken to understand what fashion consumers really need—to focus more upon quality and extended wear of products. It could balance the need and demand between the industry and consumers which could allow a long-term solution for sustainability.

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[library/encyclopedia/the-berg-companion-to-fashion/fashion-theories-of](https://www-bloomsburyfashioncentral-com.ezp3.lib.umn.edu/products/berg-fashion-library/encyclopedia/the-berg-companion-to-fashion/fashion-theories-of)

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APPENDIX A

Recruitment Flyer

Participate in Capsule Wardrobe Research!



This is a case study that will examine personal experiences of a capsule wardrobe through participating in a capsule wardrobe project among 5 to 6 volunteers.

What

You will build your own **capsule wardrobe** with **33 or fewer items** and live with those items for **8 weeks**.

When

October 16, 2017 – December 9, 2017

Who

- (1) People voluntarily want to participate in the research.
- (2) Juniors/Seniors in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota who live in Minnesota.
- (3) Females who have lived in the U.S. at least 10 years.

Compensation

If you agree to take part in this research and complete the project, you will receive gift cards worth \$200 for your time and effort.

Contact Information: Haeun Bang / haeun001@umn.edu

This research is supported by University of Minnesota.

APPENDIX B

Online Survey Questions

I. Demographic Information

I. Demographic Information

In this section, there are questions about your basic demographic information. Your information is being collected for research purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential. **Please be sure to fill in all the following blanks and select the answers that best describe you.**

Name (First/Last)

Year of Birth(MM/DD/YEAR)

UMN e-mail address

What college year are you in?

What is your major?

How would you define your race or origin?

How long have you lived in the U.S.?

II. Shopping habits

In this section, there are questions related to your shopping habits.

1. Indicate your level of agreement with the following set of statements and select the best answer.

	Strongly Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Mostly Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I like to buy separate items of clothing and combine them with what I already have in my wardrobe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I like to look for separate items that I can put together in various ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I like to buy whole ensembles that already are designed together as much as possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I follow a definite plan for meeting my clothing needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Before I shop, I usually imagine new clothing item that I would like to buy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. I purchase new clothing...

- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Every three months
- ☐ Every six months
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ I do not like to buy new

3. What motivates you to purchase new clothing and accessories? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ A new fashion trend
- ☐ Worn-out clothes
- ☐ To keep up with my friends
- ☐ Bored with styles I have
- ☐ Change of body shape or size
- ☐ Sale/Discount promotion

4. What is your average monthly clothing expense?

Less than \$50 \$ 50-100 \$ 100-200 \$ 200-300 \$ 300-400 \$ 400-500 Over \$500

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

5. Where do you usually shop your clothes? (You can select more than one)

- ☐ Department stores (i.e. Nordstrom, Macy's)
- ☐ Discount stores (i.e. Target)
- ☐ SPA brand stores (i.e. Zara, H&M, Forever 21)
- ☐ Local boutiques
- ☐ Internet shopping malls
- ☐ Vintage/Second-hand stores
- ☐ Others (Please describe)

6. When you purchase new clothing, what do you consider the most? Please drag and drop the following choices with numbers from 1 (most important) to 8 (least important).

- Price
- Quality of fabric
- Brand value
- Versatility--so that I can mix & match
- Colors to go with my skin and hair color
- Shapes and silhouettes that flatter my body

Following the latest trends

Sustainability and ethical issues

7. My method for finding out up-to-date trends is / are... (Please select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media (Instagram, Facebook, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> What I find in the store |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet generally | <input type="checkbox"/> What others are wearing |

8. When I see something I would like to wear in a magazine, or on the internet, or on the street, I record it by...

- ☐ Taking a photo
- ☐ Sketching it
- ☐ Remembering the details in my mind
- ☐ I do not record it

III. Wardrobe Strategies

III. Wardrobe Strategies

In this section, you are going to answer the questions about how you build and manage your own wardrobe.

13. Accessories are important items to make my ensembles look different.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

14. I use my creative expression in dressing myself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

15. I sometimes feel that there are many dispensable items in my wardrobe.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. How often do you rearrange clothing and accessories in you wardrobe?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once every six months
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Never

3. What is your rule for arranging clothing and accessories in your wardrobe? Please check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> By items (T-shirts, Skirt, Pants, Jackets, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> By how old it is |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By colors | <input type="checkbox"/> By how often I wear it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By silhouette | <input type="checkbox"/> By seasonal items |
| <input type="checkbox"/> By brands | <input type="checkbox"/> Randomly |

4. How often do you discard clothing and accessories in your wardrobe?

- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a month

- ☐ Once every three months
☐ Once every six months
☐ Once a year
☐ Once every several years

5. What categories of clothing do you have the most in your wardrobe? Please select **3** of the following choices.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> T-shirt | <input type="checkbox"/> Skirt | <input type="checkbox"/> Outer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blouse/Shirt | <input type="checkbox"/> Pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Suit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dress | <input type="checkbox"/> Jacket | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessory |

6-A. Are there certain shapes(silhouettes) or colors or materials or brands of clothing that you **prefer** to wear? Please select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shapes (silhouettes) | <input type="checkbox"/> Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colors | <input type="checkbox"/> Brands |

6-B. From your selection(s) above, please describe:

What shapes (silhouettes)?	<input type="text"/>
What colors?	<input type="text"/>
What materials?	<input type="text"/>
What brands?	<input type="text"/>

7-A. Are there certain shapes (silhouettes) or colors or materials or brands of clothing that you **avoid** wearing? Please select all that apply.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shapes (silhouettes) | <input type="checkbox"/> Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colors | <input type="checkbox"/> Brands |

7-B. From your selection(s) above, please describe:

What shapes (silhouettes)?

What colors?

What materials?

What brands?

IV. Sustainability and Capsule Wardrobe

IV. Creativity, Sustainability, and Capsule Wardrobe

In this section, you will be asked to answer the questions about creativity, sustainability, and a capsule wardrobe. How deeply you understand these concepts and how you practice them in your daily life are the focus.

1. Indicate your level of agreement with the following set of statements and select the best answer.

[illegible]

7. My creativity comes from careful planning and forethought.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. My creativity comes from intuitive thinking and impromptu action,	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I am interested in sustainability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I understand the concept of sustainability clearly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. When I purchase new clothing, I consider sustainability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I consider myself to be environmentally conscious.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I prefer to purchase an item of clothing that is described as 'sustainable', 'organic', 'eco-friendly' or 'ethical'.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I believe that keeping the items in my wardrobe is the best way of doing sustainable practice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I try not to purchase new clothing for reducing textile waste.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. How long do you usually keep the following categories of clothing? (Please type the number of year)

T-shirt	<input type="text"/>
Blouse/Shirt	<input type="text"/>
Dress	<input type="text"/>
Skirt	<input type="text"/>
Pants	<input type="text"/>
Jacket	<input type="text"/>

Outer

Suit

Accessory

3. How do you dispose of your old or unwanted clothes? (Choose all that apply)

- ☐ Throw away
- ☐ Donate to charity
- ☐ Keep in somewhere in my wardrobe
- ☐ Hand down to younger family members
- ☐ Mend and repair
- ☐ Other (Please describe)

4. Have you ever heard about a capsule wardrobe project?

- ☐ Yes, I have. (Please describe how you heard about it)

- ☐ No, I have not.
- ☐ I am not sure.

5. Have you ever built and managed your own capsule wardrobe before?

- ☐ Yes, I have.
- ☐ No, I have not.

6. Please describe your definition of capsule wardrobe.

7. In your opinion, what should be the ideal number of items for creating a sustainable capsule wardrobe?

- ☐ Less than 20
- ☐ 20 to 25
- ☐ 25 to 30
- ☐ 30 to 35
- ☐ 35 to 40
- ☐ More than 40

8. Have you ever taken any class(es) related to creativity at UMN?

- ☐ Yes [Please write down the course title(s) in the box below]


- ☐ No

Thank you

Thank you so much for your precious time. Please offer suggestions for additional questions or rewording of these questions to **Haeun Bang** (haeun001@umn.edu).

APPENDIX C

Example of an Item List
(Item List of Participant-2)

					
#	1	#	2	#	3
Category	Shirt	Category	T-Shirt	Category	Shirt
Silhouette	Sleeveless	Silhouette	Loose knit	Silhouette	Fitted
Color	Black	Color	Black	Color	Multi
Material	100% Polyester	Material	60% Rayon, 40% Polyester	Material	None given
Brand	WhoWhatWear for Target	Brand	Hanes	Brand	Jean Paul Gaultier
Size	S	Size	M	Size	None given
etc.	Purchased new at Salvation Army basement	etc.	Purchased new at Salvation Army basement	etc.	given as gift, purchased at Estate Sale
					
#	4	#	5	#	6
Category	T-Shirt	Category	Shirt	Category	Sweater/Shirt
Silhouette	Drop shoulder	Silhouette	Loose knit	Silhouette	Polo neck long sleeved
Color	Blue and pink striped	Color	B+W striped	Color	Navy
Material	Cotton/Rayon/Spandex blend	Material	58% Pima cotton, 39% Modal, 3% Spandex	Material	100% Wool

Brand	n/a	Brand	Merona	Brand	COS
Size	n/a	Size	XL	Size	M
etc.	Homemade	etc.	Purchased new at Salvation Army basement	etc.	Purchased new
					
#	7	#	8	#	9
Category	Turtleneck	Category	Blouse	Category	Blouse
Silhouette	Fitted	Silhouette	Blouson	Silhouette	Blouson/Loose
Color	Black	Color	Black	Color	Rust
Material	95% Rayon, 5% Spandex	Material	100% Polyester	Material	100% Cotton
Brand	Saks Fifth Avenue	Brand	Target	Brand	Uniqlo
Size	S	Size	S	Size	S
etc.	Purchased new	etc.	Purchased new	etc.	Purchased new
					
#	10	#	11	#	12
Category	Shirt	Category	Shirt	Category	Shirt
Silhouette	Oversized	Silhouette	Basic, straight	Silhouette	Basic, straight
Color	White	Color	Tan	Color	Black and white
Material	100% Cotton	Material	100% Cotton	Material	100% Cotton
Brand	Black Brown	Brand	Uniqlo	Brand	Banana Republic
Size	15-33	Size	S	Size	S
etc.	thrifted	etc.	purchased new	etc.	thrifted

					
#	13	#	14	#	15
Category	Sweatshirt	Category	Sweater	Category	Cardigan
Silhouette	Cropped long-sleeve	Silhouette	Slightly cropped	Silhouette	Loose
Color	Black	Color	Gray	Color	Coral
Material	76% Cotton, 24% Polyester	Material	100% Cashmere	Material	50% Wool, 25% Angora, 25% Cashmere
Brand	SprzNY for Uniqlo	Brand	Tags removed	Brand	Chloe
Size	S	Size	tags removed	Size	M
etc.	purchased new	etc.	thrifted	etc.	Purchased consignment
					
#	16	#	17	#	18
Category	Cardigan	Category	Dress	Category	Dress
Silhouette		Silhouette	Fitted A-line, knit	Silhouette	Knit, A-line
Color	Leopard	Color	Multi	Color	Green
Material	100% Acrylic	Material	100% Nylon	Material	60% Cotton, 40% Rayon
Brand	Mossimo	Brand	tags removed	Brand	Mossimo
Size	S	Size	M	Size	M
etc.	Purchased new	etc.	thrifted	etc.	Purchased new at Salvation Army basement

					
#	19	#	20	#	21
Category	Dress	Category	Jacket	Category	Jacket
Silhouette	Fit and flare	Silhouette	Moto	Silhouette	Loose fitting blazer
Color	Black	Color	Camel	Color	Brown
Material	95% Cotton, 5% Spandex	Material	82% Polyester, 18% Spandex	Material	none given
Brand	WhoWhatWear for Target	Brand	Style & Co	Brand	International Scene
Size	S	Size	S	Size	none given
etc.	purchased new	etc.	Purchased new	etc.	thrifted
					
#	22	#	23	#	24
Category	Shirt	Category	Ponte pant	Category	Jeans
Silhouette	Loose button-up blouson	Silhouette	Fitted	Silhouette	Highwaisted, cropped
Color	Black	Color	Black	Color	Faded black
Material	100% Polyester	Material	68% Rayon, 28% Nylon, 4% Spandex	Material	100% Cotton
Brand	DW3	Brand	White House Black Market	Brand	St. Johns Bay
Size	6	Size	Tag Removed	Size	6P
etc.	Purchased thrifted	etc.	hand-me-down	etc.	hand-me-down

					
#	25	#	26	#	27
Category	Pants	Category	Jeans	Category	Jeans
Silhouette	Flared, cropped	Silhouette	Bootcut	Silhouette	Straight, loose, cropped
Color	Dark navy	Color	Blue	Color	Blue
Material	64% Cotton, 32% Polyester, 4% Spandex	Material	98% Cotton, 2% Spandex	Material	100% Cotton
Brand	7For all Mankind	Brand	Mavi	Brand	RL Polo Jean Company
Size	26	Size	28	Size	8
etc.	Purchased consignment, tailored by self	etc.	Purchased at outlet	etc.	thrifed
					
#	28	#	29	#	30
Category	Hightops	Category	Booties	Category	Boots
Silhouette		Silhouette		Silhouette	
Color	Black	Color	Black	Color	Army green
Material	Textile and rubber sole	Material	Manmade (?)	Material	Leather upper sole
Brand	Converse	Brand	Apt. 9	Brand	Donald J Pliner
Size	9	Size	9	Size	9
etc.	Purchased new	etc.	Gift	etc.	Purchased new

					
#	31	#	32	#	33
Category	Sneakers	Category	Purse	Category	Backpack
Silhouette		Silhouette	Camera/box	Silhouette	
Color	Ruby	Color	Black	Color	Black
Material		Material	Leather	Material	n/a
Brand	Mossimo	Brand	Nina Marvin	Brand	Targus w University of Wisconsin-Stout logo
Size	9	Size	n/a	Size	n/a
etc.	Gift	etc.	Purchased new	etc.	Hand-me-down

APPENDIX D

First Questionnaire

Congratulations on creating your own capsule wardrobe! Please fill in the blanks.

Questions	Your Answers
How much time did you spend on creating your capsule wardrobe?	
Which item did you pick up the first and why?	
What were your strategies selecting items?	
What factors—i.e. silhouette, color, material, brand, etc.—do you consider the most?	
Are you satisfied with your capsule wardrobe?	
Please share any thoughts and feelings you have about this project right now.	

APPENDIX E

Daily Journal Template

This is your daily journal that you need to fill out at the end of each day. Please fill in all blanks below. If you are unable to complete this journal, please describe the reason—it can be brief.

Date	
Picture(s) of today's outfit	
Item Numbers	
Do you like your outfit for today?	
Why or why not?	
Did you wear the same outfit that you have worn before? Or did you create a new outfit that you have never tried?	
Which factor(s) did you consider when you put the items together?	
Any thoughts or feelings you want to share?	

APPENDIX F

Second Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions.

Questions	Your Answers
Did you rearrange your capsule wardrobe? Why or why not?	
How much time did you spend on rearranging your capsule wardrobe?	
What were your strategies of rearranging the wardrobe?	
What factors—i.e. silhouette, color, material, brand, etc.—did you consider the most?	
Are you satisfied with your updated capsule wardrobe? Why?	
Please share any thoughts and feelings you have about this project right now.	

If you reorganized your capsule wardrobe, please fill in the blanks below. The reason for removing/adding/switching should be described as detail as possible. If your capsule wardrobe was not reorganized and nothing has changed, you do not need to fill in this form.

Item Number	Classification (R/A/S)	Reason

- R: Removed / A: (Newly) Added / S: Switched

APPENDIX G

Pre-Interview Questions

1. How many items did you have in your original wardrobe?
2. What was the motivation for participating in this capsule wardrobe project?
3. Explain how you usually create your ensembles.
 - Which item do you usually select first?
 - What factors are important to you? (ex: whether condition, color combination, proportion, balance, mix of textures, etc.)
4. Do you consider yourself as a creative person? Why or why not?
5. How do you express your creativity in your daily life?
6. Please evaluate your creativity level on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 is the minimum and 10 is the maximum)
7. You created your capsule wardrobe. Was there any difficulty? If so, what was it?
8. What are your expectations for this project? What do you want to earn from this project?
9. What are your concerns about this project?

APPENDIX H

Post-Interview Questions

1. Please share your overall impressions of this 8-week capsule wardrobe project.
2. Do you think that whatever number of items you selected for your capsule wardrobe was enough? Why or why not?
3. Please select the best and the worst item in your capsule wardrobe and explain why.
4. What was the most aesthetically pleasing ensemble and why?
5. Did you try your best to create new ensembles? If so, what were the motivations to do that?
6. Do people around you like your family and friends recognize that you were participating in the capsule wardrobe project?
7. Do you think that there is any change in your creativity level before and after this project?
8. Do you think now you have better understanding of sustainability than before? Why or why not?
9. What kind of wardrobe strategies did you learn through this project?
10. What are the benefits you think you have earned through this project?
11. In your opinion, what are the limitations of this project?
12. Would you like to continue to participate in this project? Why or why not?
13. Would you like to recommend this project to others? Why or why not?